

# Li Hung-changs Fædreland

og

## Ostasiens Historie

efter Freden til Shimonoseki.

Af

W. Coucheron-Aamot.

Med 48 Illustrationer og 3 Kartter.



Kristiania

P. T. Mallings Boghandels  
Forlag.

# **Li Hung-chang's Fatherland**

and

## **The History of East-Asia**

**after the Treaty of Shimonoseki**

by

**W. Coucheron-Aamot**

with 48 illustrations and 3 maps.



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**Published 1898**

## Translator's Note:

My grandfather was born 29 January 1868 as one of eleven children born to a small-town lawyer in Egersund, Norway. He went to sea while still a teenager, but then somehow managed to get an appointment to the Norwegian Naval Academy in Horten, Norway. Upon graduation he wrote a small book about his experiences there, "*Fra Orlogslivet*" ("From Navy Life") and also a short novel, "*Sjøkadet West*" ("Naval Ensign West"). He then traveled out to China in 1889 and joined the Imperial Chinese Customs Service as 3<sup>d</sup> officer on the ICCS cruiser "*Ling-Fêng*" 1890-92, when he resigned from the Customs Service and returned home as described in "*Fra den Kinesiske Mur til Japans Hellige Bjerg samt Hjemreisen to Norge*" ("From the Great Wall of China to Japan's Holy Mountain and the Return Voyage Home"), published in 1893.

"*Gjennem de Gules Land*" og "*Krigen i Østasien*" ("Through the Land of the Yellow People" and "The War in East-Asia"), published in one volume in 1895, is an account of his experiences aboard "*Ling-Fêng*", and of the 1<sup>st</sup> Sino-Japanese War up to the Treaty of Shimonoseki.

He does not explicitly say so, but obviously the 1<sup>st</sup> Sino-Japanese War was fought after he had left the area. I think he took the opportunity to write "*Krigen i Østasien*" from the contemporary foreign newspaper reports available in the Norwegian Ministry of the Interior, where he was employed after his return home, and views based on his observations during his travels.

"*Li Hung-chang's Fædreland*" og "*Østasiens Historie efter Freden til Shimonoseki*" ("Li Hung-chang's Fatherland" and "The History of East Asia after the Treaty of Shimonoseki") followed in 1898, the former consisting largely of a compilation of the author's previously published magazine articles describing Chinese society to a Scandinavian public, and the latter a supplement to "*Krigen i Østasien*" describing the Japanese conquest of Formosa (Taiwan) and the immediate aftermath of the First Sino-Japanese War in China and Japan.

Since my grandfather wrote in 19<sup>th</sup> century Danish, I thought English translations might be worthwhile.

Hans H. Coucheron-Aamot

## Preface

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Most of the contents of all the chapters in the first part of this volume, "Li Hung-chang's Fatherland," have been published earlier in Norwegian, Danish, Swedish, German, Swiss, Austrian, and American newspapers and magazines.

The second part, "The History of East Asia after the Treaty of Shimonoseki," may be considered as a continuation of my work about the war in East Asia.

Since the printing – 3,000 copies – of the latter book in Norwegian is almost sold out, I have herein given a short resumé of the war's progress for the convenience of the readers of the present volume.

I hereby use this opportunity to thank all those who have so willingly obliged me by furnishing valuable information.

In addition to direct correspondence with friends and acquaintances in China, Japan, and Korea, I have among others conferred with the following East Asian newspapers and periodicals: *Japan Official Gazette*, *Nippon*, *Mainichi*,



*Japan Herald, Korean Repository, Japan Mail, Jiji Shimpō, Nischi Nischi Shimbun, Rising Sun, Kobe Chronicle, Yorodzu Chōhō, North China Daily News, North China Herald, Shanghai Mercury, Peking and Tientsin Times, Hongkong Telegraph, The Peking Gazette, Hupao, Shenpao, and Chefoo Express.*

As I have considered it best to carry the history of East Asia as far forward as possible, the number of pages has become a little larger than intended, but I hope that the well-disposed reader will not object to getting a fuller overview.

It will be helpful in understanding the more or less obscure warnings of troubled times to come in "editorials" the European press has printed regarding the new German gospel that is now to be preached to the heathen Chinese.

Christiania, March 1898.

W. Coucheron-Aamot

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# **I**

## **Li Hung-chang's Fatherland**

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Li Hung-chang.

*Respect me  
Yours Very Sincerely*

李鴻章



*Til*

*Hds. Kgl. Høihed*  
*Prinsesse Ingeborg*

*i dyb Ærbødighed*

*fra*

*Forfatteren*

*To*

*Her Royal Highness  
Princess Ingeborg*

*with the deepest respect*

*from*

*the author*

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## Introduction

---

Lack of understanding often manifests itself by derision and scorn. Intolerance and prejudice are usually the fruits of ignorance.

Here I am thinking about the peculiar relationship that still exists between the world's oldest civilization and the Western nations. Steam and electricity have eliminated the physical difficulties for communications. The distances have shrunk to a minimum. However, the white and the yellow races still live without knowledge and without understanding of each other, but with mutual contempt and ridicule.

Those who should have brought enlightenment to the masses have neither in the East nor in the West understood the guilt they bring onto themselves by day in and day out dispensing caricature distortions of each others' institutions, customs, and traditions. Nor do they seem to have realized that the life-force that flow through all living beings bring forth different thoughts, ideas, and customs depending on the character of the areas of the world through which the current flows.

China's greatest son, Confucius, once told a disciple: "Do not regret that people do not know you, but rather regret that you do not know them."

The compatriots of the Chinese sage, as well as the Europeans and the Americans, would do well to take his words to heart. Then the barriers that now separate the East and the West would soon fall down. The white and the yellow races would learn to appreciate each others' good characteristics – things they could admire in each other – and then these mutual concessions might perhaps form the basis for a friendship that could have immeasurable benefits for both. Knowledge is necessary for understanding.

This book is – like my other writings on East Asia – an attempt to break down the wall that intolerance and prejudice have formed between thinking minds both in the East and the West.

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## Chapter One

### How is the world's oldest state governed?

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**H**ow to achieve the highest degree of happiness for the greatest number of people is a social problem that many of our cleverest thinkers have wrestled with – especially in the nineteenth century.

Has the problem been solved? Have the Europeans or the Americans invented a form of government that works satisfactorily for all layers of society?

A threatening growl is heard from the millions of the third estate, bombs are thrown from the anarchists' camp; a negative answer comes from north and south, east and west, declaring the architects of the present societies have not been equal to the task.

The Western nations must hope for the future; perhaps it will bring more gifted architects, men who do not concoct political systems just within the narrow horizon seen from their ivory towers, men who will understand to plumb the depths of human nature.

While we are waiting – might it not be of interest to find out something about the principles whereby the oriental nations are governed? Maybe we Europeans could find something out there in the East of that which we lack in our own social order? Imagine if we put our stupid superiority theories aside for a moment and studied the fundamental principles whereby the world's largest empire has been governed for the last 5 – 6,000 years! Would not such a system of government – such as the Chinese – be worth studying for Europe's armchair politicians?

We usually value the goodness of a system by its ability to survive, and set the degree of happiness it grants to the largest number of people as a measure of a government's wisdom.

Well! The Chinese state has outlived all others. The Assyrian, the Persian, Greek, and Roman states have all vanished; only the Chinese has defied thousands of years of political and social upheavals. We see today – though Europe's leading newspapers and periodicals from colonial policy considerations will try to throw dust in our eyes – a homogeneous nation, tightly knit together by customs, traditions, language, and institutions. This race presently number 400 million of the earth's most peaceful, industrious, sober, and thrifty inhabitants. Yet confronted with this society – the largest and oldest that the sun has ever shone upon – our small European parvenu nations still presume to talk down to its rulers in the tones of a condescending schoolmaster!

\*

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\*

The Chinese empire is as is well known larger than all of Europe in both area and population.

The Chinese distinguish very sharply between China proper and the vassal states in political matters.

The internal administrations of the vassal states could be interesting enough to deserve a chapter of its own, but here I will only discuss China proper, which is populated by a race that speaks the same language and has the same national customs and traditions.

China proper is divided into 18 provinces for administrative purposes. So that we can get a reasonably clear picture of the governmental machinery that works in all these provinces with the same force and following the same principles, it is necessary to begin with the machinery's smallest wheel, and that is – the family.

Within certain boundaries *paterfamilias* has – as in ancient Rome – total authority over the individual members of a family. Several families, usually about ten, again form the next higher entity and choose the most esteemed of the fathers as headman. He is then held responsible for maintaining peace and good order in the street or hamlet where these families live. Several hamlets or a section of a city then choose a justice of the peace or a sheriff who is held responsible for the residents of his commune by an official appointed by the emperor to govern a *hsien* or district. There are about 80 of these in each province on the average. Each district has its own capital surrounded by high walls, which earlier could resist an extended siege.



Europeans translate *che-hsien* as "district magistrate," but this is not quite correct; the magistrate title in our system does not imply all the functions of this official, since the *che-hsien* carries out all the duties that we parse out between the sheriff, the magistrate, the mayor – and even the parish minister too.

If it is desired to simplify the bureaucracy, the Chinese can give us some good hints. They have always felt that officials are there to serve the people, and not the other way around.

The next administrative level is a *fu*, which normally consists of 5 districts and is managed by a *che-fu*, who is comparable to a county administrator here in Norway. All decisions that have not been satisfactorily resolved by a magistrate may be appealed to the *che-fu*.

The county administrator lives in the county's largest town. When we look at a map of China, we see several cities with the suffix "*fu*." This only indicates that a *che-fu* has his official residence there.

Three or four counties are again combined, and the civil official who governs this entity is called *taotai* by both the Chinese and the Europeans.

"His Excellency" usually gets his way from us – as well he might, since this "Excellency" rules over a population as large as Norway's, Sweden's, and Denmark's combined, and in these countries there are many "excellencies" – both former and presently – besides a couple of majesties and a number of highnesses.

The provincial governor, or *tsung-tu*, stands above all the *taotai*. He resides in the province capital, which usually has a million or more inhabitants.

Some time ago I read a book by a famous American geographer. Among other things, he listed the world's cities with a million or more inhabitants, and he credited China with two. To my knowledge, there are 15 such cities in the empire, and I have visited 6 of them.

In a provincial capital there are also three high officials who serve as finance, justice, and education ministers.

In addition, a *titu* serves alongside the governor. This gentleman commands the small Manchu garrison that has been stationed in each of the provincial capitals since the days of the conquest. The tartar general, as the Europeans call him, has a larger role as the representative of the Manchu dynasty and monitor of the Chinese governor's management of his office. The purpose of this arrangement is to prevent any uprising against the Manchu overlordship from taking place.

To further insure against excessive popularity, the higher officials are appointed for only three years at a time, and their reappointment depends on their attention to the people's interests as well as the government's. Also, no official is appointed to the district or province in which he was born in order to prevent family interests from influencing his administration.

The Europeans usually translate *tsung-tu* as "viceroy," but this title is also rather misleading, since these powerful mandarins, several of whom govern territories as large and populous as France, are not men of inheritable rank, nor are

they members of the imperial house appointed to represent the imperial authority over a province.

Far from it. As we will hear later, the nation has insisted since ancient times that *no one has an inherited right to rule over his fellow citizens*. The governors simply are members of the civil administration, men, who in their youth passed their official examinations with more or less success and later learned to practice their knowledge in lesser offices.

As in the United States of America, each province manages its own affairs and the governors are almost independent of the imperial government as long as they govern in accordance with the very precise rules specified for their governance.

Each province must maintain its own provincial army – and navy, if it borders the ocean or has navigable rivers. Due to the absolute commitment of the Chinese race to peace and its well developed civilization, the military establishment was at the turn of the century reduced to that which we Europeans may perhaps attain sometime in the future – a military reserve to maintain order with no offensive capability.

On the other hand there is no organized police. I have walked through metropolises such as Canton and Hanchow late at night without meeting a single one of these peace keepers, which we fortunately find stationed on every street corner in the great cities of Europe. I still believe that every respectable European in China will admit to feel safer about being alone in, f. ex., Canton than in London.

The provincial militia that is available to the governor in case of disturbances is quite insignificant compared to the armies of "Europe's most civilized nations."

The province of Szechuan, which is twice as Great Britain and Ireland in both area and population, has an army hardly larger than London's police force.

But therefore the taxes are not especially burdensome either. At present an average Chinese pays the equivalent of 50 cents American in direct and indirect taxes, while a German or Frenchman pays at least ca. 7 dollars.

The *Lüh-ying*, or the Army of the Green Flag," as these provincial militias are called, is supposed to have a total of ca. 650,000 soldiers altogether, but I believe the number in reality cannot be set higher than ca. 300,000, since each governor usually tries to spare his province as much as possible from expenses for the local military force.

The regimental commanders certainly must show the prescribed number of soldiers at the annual inspections, but everybody that has spent some time in China knows how the rolls are filled.

F. ex, it is absolutely astonishing how hard it is to find an available worker in Shanghai when the *taotai* is inspecting the nearby forts at Woosung, but if one looks closely at the parading ranks, it is not difficult to recognize a number of familiar faces. For a half dollar (Hong Kong), the coolies will gladly put on a soldier's jacket for the occasion of His Excellency's visit.

It has been, and still is, the understanding of most Europeans that the Opium Wars, the Tongking War, and the

last so-called Sino-Japanese War were fought with the whole Chinese empire. This conception must be knocked down, or the common people will never understand that when China is mentioned, it refers to an empire larger than all of Europe.

No, *China* has not fought any of these wars.

During disturbances the governors have been – and still are – only responsible for their own provinces, and they must finance the military operations out of their own provincial budgets. This arrangement was very practical – until the Chinese came into contact with the Christian civilizations from the West – since before then China was surrounded by only smaller and less developed Asian states.

However, the logical consequence of the system was that the respective governors only worried about their own provinces and left their neighbors to their own devices, unless an order from Peking commanded them to march to the rescue.

The aim of the policy of making war by the individual provinces has mainly been to restrict the horrors of war to the smallest possible land area.

The Tongking War of 1884 thus was fought by the provinces Kwantung and Fukien and the war with Japan in 1894-95 by the Pechihli province. The lamentable outcome of the latter war, will likely result in greater centralization and a re-organization of the provinces' military forces.

In return for the extensive authority a Chinese provincial governor has been given, he is held *personally* responsible for good and just government.

If his subjects on some occasion or other become discontented and send a written complaint to the imperial government, the governor will be held to account, and if he has committed any serious errors in his administration, it may happen that an imperial lightning bolt in the form of a telegram relegates the mighty satrap to the ranks of common mortals.

The governor is the only official in the province who is permitted to correspond directly with the emperor, and he has an explicit duty to keep His Majesty up to date about conditions in his province.

The governor can suspend even a *taotai*, but he is not allowed to punish or transfer any of his subordinate officials, since these have, like himself, been appointed by the imperial government.

If the governor has reasons to be dissatisfied with an underling, he must send a written complaint to Peking, and the individual will be punished or acquitted after a thorough investigation.

This personal responsibility that is placed on the governor's shoulders of course makes him very critical of his subordinates' performance in office, and the official newspaper – the world's oldest – "The Peking Gazette,"\* daily prints reports of officials who have been prosecuted and punished on their governor's request.

As an illustration I will cite an official announcement in "*King-pau*" for 15 March 1892.

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\* "*King-pau*," or "Capital Sheet" in Chinese.

His Excellence, Li Han-chang, governor general of Liang Kuang, has submitted the following report to the throne:

"Wan Ping-tung, magistrate in Sinchow, lacks the required administrative skills, has little knowledge, and is generally unfit for his important post.

Liu Ching-lai, county administrator in Wuchow has neglected his official duties and has engaged in commercial transactions. He is also disliked by the people. The governor general requests that the emperor demote these officials.

At the same time His Excellence reports that Han Chu-mei, *taotai* of Kweilin, is much too old and frail to take care of his office with the necessary energy. It is therefore requested that the emperor will dismiss Han Chu-mei."

Under which it has pleased His Majesty to note:

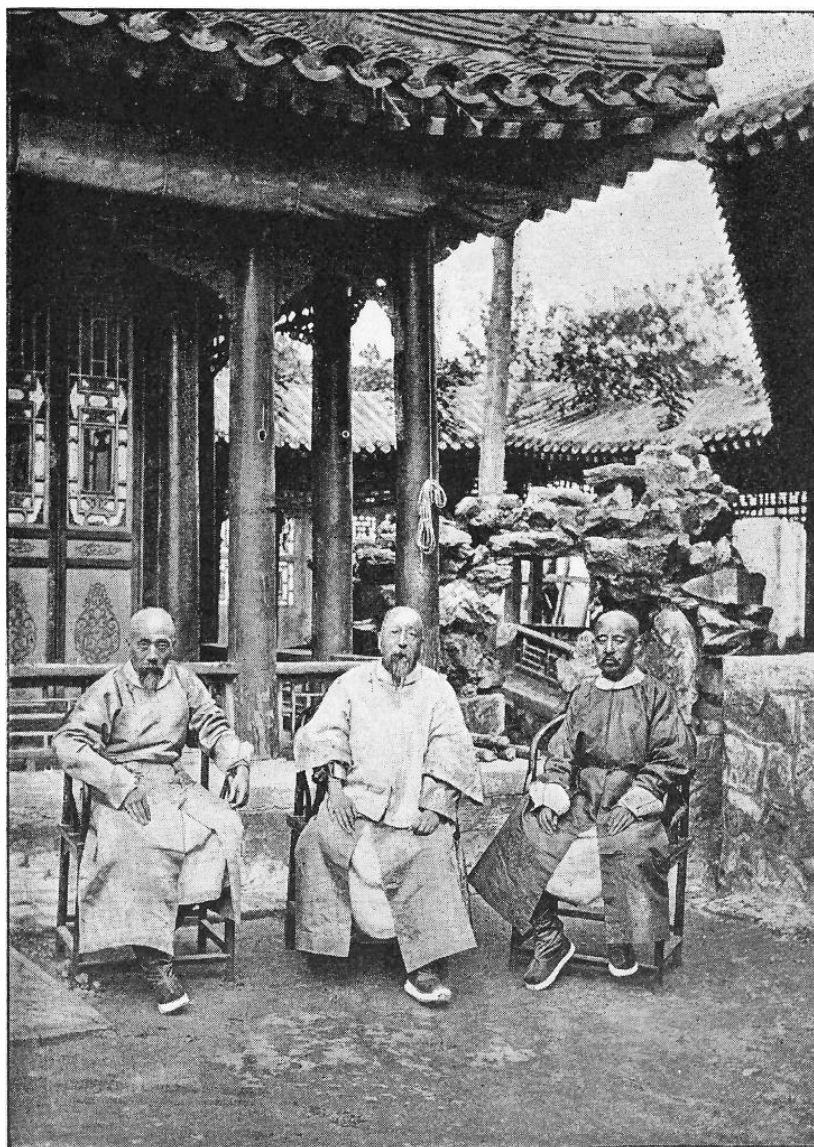
"Referred to the Department of Justice, who will investigate and report."

That the officials are loath to see themselves the subject for such indelicate attention – and that in China's sole official newspaper, of which millions of copies are spread into the farthest corners of the empire – goes without saying.

Such announcements work as a very serious admonition to carry out their duties to the government and the people.

On the other hand I must also mention that "*King-pau*" contains numerous reports from the governors about officials whose performance have made them deserving of promotion.

Of course, it can sometimes happen that some mandarin has gained his superior's personal disapproval and then is unjustly "blackened" to the emperor. If this is discovered, the false complainant is severely punished. A couple of years ago



Members of the Grand Secretariat.



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the governor of Hunan thus was dismissed for such an offense.

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All the threads of government come together in China's capital city, Peking. The central administration is headed by the emperor and his council.

The four ministers of state, or grand secretaries, are highest in rank, but seldom in power. They form a separate section of the cabinet, which the Chinese call *Niu Koh*. However, since a couple of its members generally also hold office as provincial governors and thus are absent from Peking, the *Niu Koh's* influence in the central government is greatly diminished.

Although, in recent years the contrary has been the case, since the 1<sup>st</sup> Grand Secretary, Li Hung-chang, has been the dominant influence over the whole government from his residence in Tientsin.

The grand secretaries always work in close association with the ruler. All important state documents pass through their hands before the emperor gets to see them, and no government decree is considered official until the Grand Secretariat has affixed the imperial seal to it.

At present, ca. 200 officials and secretaries serve in the *Niu Koh*. Ten of them are members of the Hanlin Academy.\*

The other section of the cabinet is called the *Kium Ki Chu*, or General Council. It is a relatively new institution, founded by Emperor Yung Ching in 1730 so that the head of state

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\* Will be discussed later.

could have the benefit of a larger number of experienced and competent counselors to advise him.

In the course of time, the influence of the *Kiun Ki Chu* has increased such that its members now possess much of the empire's legislative and executive authority. They hold their meetings in the emperor's own palace and, according to protocol, these are supposed to take place between 4 and 6 o'clock every morning.

The vast empire's administrative business is divided between 7 departments, each headed up by 2 presidents and 4 vice-presidents, who can also be members of the cabinet.

According to the official state register, no less than 20,000 officials are employed in the central administration's offices. Discipline within this bureaucratic army is extremely strict. The least misstep is immediately punished by reduction of one or more steps in rank, affecting pay, position, and pension. The latter is only granted to old, deserving officials, when they no longer are capable of working.

Finally, I will mention a remarkable institution that in many ways plays the same role as the European parliaments. It is the *Tu Cha Yuen*, which may be translated as the "Censorate."

This venerable body in theory – and usually also in practice – consists of China's most respected and trusted men. Their duty is to monitor everything and everybody, from the emperor on his throne down to the most insignificant provincial official. They are therefore also often called "the emperor's eyes and ears."

The Censorate usually has 50 to 60 members. Half of these are stationed around in the provinces. Whoever has a complaint to present – be it a poor widow or the entire population of a province – woe to the guilty if the complaint is shown to be justified. Even the emperor must submit to being reprimanded by these stern tribunes for the people.

But these gentlemen's duty is not only to monitor and rebuke misconduct. If one of them has raised a charge against one of the provincial governors, and it is shown that the complaint is justified, it may happen that the emperor suspends the governor and commands the censor to take his place and correct the committed error. It is therefore rare that the censors send out their lightning bolts unless they are certain they are justified.

The authority of the *Tu Cha Yuen* has been considerably eroded in later years. The ultra-conservative element has been much too dominant within the ranks of the Censorate. They have not always understood the demand of the times, and thus when their censure has been directed at statesmen of Li Hung-chang's stature, they have often just managed to make themselves look foolish.

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I have tried to draw an outline of how the Chinese government is organized and will now go on to explain the basic principles on which it is formed.

We learned in school that China is a despotic empire. This is entirely erroneous. The will of the people – and that alone forms the foundation on which this vast empire rests. The Chinese have since ancient times possessed a freedom that the common people of the European nations could hardly dream of before the French revolution breached the walls of feudal despotism and priestly tyranny.

What has been more significant for the development of the nation is that through the old teachers, whose names still are mentioned with the deepest reverence, the people have come to understand that freedom depends on responsibility. This strong feeling of responsibility that we can see even in the common laborer has again resulted in an unqualified demand: *Hien neng* – the most able and talented – shall govern.

\*

The civilizing process in many ways is still in its early stages among the small nations of the West, especially in moral respects.

The concept of civilization is understood very differently in different parts of the world. Thus the Chinese consider us Europeans as barbarians and we return the compliment by counting them among the half-civilized nations.

But in this connection I will define the civilizing process as *a gradual change from the use of physical force to moral and intellectual influence in the human struggle for survival.*

Throughout Europe's relatively short history there has rarely been heard any appeal to moral sentiments to decide conflicts between the nations. Quite the contrary.

We remember the story about the Celtic chieftain Brennus when he stood before the walls of Rome with his wild horde. The Romans complained that he used false scales when weighing out the ransom. Brennus then arrogantly threw his sword onto the scale pan and cried: "*Væe victis!*" ("Woe to the vanquished!")

The Celtic chieftain's reply can still serve as an exemplification of European social conditions in the last several centuries. Moral and intelligent arguments must give way to the brute supremacy of the sword. Even today in the nineteenth century! How far have we come?

Intellectually, the civilizing process has developed with giant strides. Morally, we remain on about the same level as our ancestors when they were running around in the primordial forests of Europe.

Armed to the teeth the nations confront each other ready to murder when their interests come into conflict. In Asia and Africa the "most civilized nations" play a game that hardly has any equal in the history of the world. Whole peoples are poisoned with opium and whiskey or are cut down as grain at harvest time with machine guns, and under one pretext or another, the governments of the "most civilized nations" steal and plunder like common highway bandits.

Are these phenomena the earmarks of barbarity or civilization?

Still – throughout the Western world we hear a call, a rallying cry that grows louder day by day: Down with the weapons, peace between nations! It warns us that the moral civilization is at hand. May it become as powerful in the coming century as the intellectual civilization in the nineteenth.

The social order of the European nations has developed to the clanging of swords. This has made it impossible to make the same demand as the Chinese people made to their leaders centuries before the Christian era began: *The most able and talented shall govern.*

Right up to the French revolution we know what importance the will and demand of the people had among those who held the power. And the power? Was it the people who had placed them in the high seats? No, most often it was with the sword that these rulers had seized their places in society. Or they had inherited them. Both cases are equally uncertain prerequisites for the individual to be counted among the most able and talented.

After the French revolution and up to now, we have believed to have found that the best means of expressing the will of the people and realizing their demands is through popularly elected political assemblies. We may also have thought that by popular elections we would get government by the nation's most worthy and intelligent men. The former intent we may consider to have been more or less attained, but the latter?

Not hardly.

There is no one who, even in jest, will insist that the European national assemblies consist entirely of the most worthy and most talented men available. This would certainly be an exception as far as the Scandinavian nations are concerned.

We Europeans thus still bite our fingers for an ideal government, such as that which the great nation out there in the East has more or less achieved through their greatest institution,

### The Examination System.

It has been impossible to evaluate an aspiring official's moral quality or his sense of justice by examinations, but one essential factor could be ascertained – his intelligence.

By a careful study of human nature, the Chinese psychologists had decided that since there is a close correlation between ignorance and vice, great intellectual talents must also be connected to superior moral concepts. The problem then was to by some method or other find the most gifted in the nation.

Legend says that already ca. 2,200 years before Christ the Emperor Shun examined his officials every third year and that after three tries he either promoted or dismissed them. The legend does not say whether they had to pass an examination *before* they were appointed; nor does it mention the subjects in which the emperor examined them.

But a thousand years later, during the Chou dynasty, history gives us more detailed information. We are told that the candidates for office had to give proof of their knowledge



of music, archery, horsemanship, writing, astronomy, and ceremonies.

At the time of Christ, we find that the scope of the examinations had been significantly expanded. The ideas of the great Chinese philosophers Confucius, Lao-tse, and Mencius by that time had reformed the whole society and laid down the basic rules for the nation's further development.

We see that the candidates' moral standards are taken into consideration. The emperor has ordered that the magistrates "send up to the capital young men who are known to be good sons and of a sincere and straightforward character." He considered *a candidate's faithful performance of duties at home as the best guarantee for faithfulness in his official life.*

In addition to the old examination subjects, the "good sons" are now expected to have extensive knowledge of the works of the philosophers as well as the civil law, military organization, agriculture, finance and economics, plus the history and geography of the empire. From the old times to now, the examination system has taken firmer and firmer forms while at the same time the purpose of the tests has constantly changed according to the requirements the Chinese have found to be demanded by the respective times.

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Before I go on to explain the significance the system has for the nation as a whole, I will describe how the examinations are conducted.

The aspirants are gathered in the district's principal city after having submitted the required attestations. When the examination begins, they are locked into a narrow cell for an entire day. The completed examination papers are collected by the censors, and the aspirants return to their homes to await the outcome with intense trepidation, since of the many hundreds of competitors there is only a limited number that will pass the examination – 2 percent at the most.

It is not as with us, where even the most mediocre talents can make it through *examen artium* and then enter the university to continue their studies for official office.

No, the Chinese want better guarantees. Only a score of the best examination papers are considered worthy of being honored.

The fortunate students gain the title of *siu tsai*, or "budding scholars," and are allowed the distinctions that officials of the lowest rank are entitled to.

However, an office they do not get; the honor will have to be enough for the time being. They are raised above the great mass of the people and exempt from corporeal punishment if they later should stray from the straight and narrow. From now on they belong to the aristocracy of the talented.

A large part of the *siu tsai* shy away from taking the next step on the examination path. Some prefer to just be one of the "select" in their home communities or to accept a modest position as a magistrate's secretary or schoolmaster. Life is then not so demanding and the risk of failure and humiliation not so threatening.

A Chinese proverb says that "the storm that knocks down a tall tree yet spares the leaves of grass by its base."

The road to high office is full of thorns and demands the utmost exertion for success. This is probably also why the sons of the wealthy seldom attain a prominent position.

Every third year the students who will compete in the second examination are gathered in the capital of their province. The number of contestants is rather impressive relative to our Lilliputian standards. Canton's "Examination Hall" has room for 12,000 students.

The cells are constructed in long rows from west to east. Each row of cells has its own kitchen. The cells have no doors or windows, but are open toward the south. The examinations are divided into 3 periods of 2 days each, and in the last period the candidate must not leave his cell at all.

Before he is locked in, he is searched from top to toe to make sure no miniature editions of the classical works or other memory aids should have been forgotten within the folds of his gown. If such an intimate search has a positive result, the candidate not only loses his earlier title, but is also barred from ever taking the examination again later and of course loses all respect from his fellow citizens.

The examinations are regarded as so important that the emperor himself appoints the head censor for each year. The other censors consist of the provincial finance and justice ministers, the senior judge, and two other high officials, who all must impress their seals on the test papers.

When the imperial head censor arrives, he is not allowed to confer with his colleagues. He establishes his residence

within the examination grounds and does not leave until the examination is over. He usually has a score of subordinate officials who are known for their learning to assist him.

Inside the high wall that surrounds the examination grounds, there are also hundreds of copyists, bookbinders, cooks, and soldiers who act as police. Altogether, the number of people living within the walls on examination days must be estimated at 20 to 25,000.

As at the first examination, it is only a miniscule number that make the grade; from 40 to 90 depending on the size of the province's population

Does the nation now have sufficient guarantees, since it now has an inventory of the respective provinces' intellectuals? But no. The people want to be absolutely sure of their selection.

The emperor has never been of the opinion that we Europeans much too often hold to in practice: that he to whom God gives an office, he also gives competence.

The fortunate ones, who survive the second examination, still are not entitled to any office. They usually must be content with the honor, but it is hardly less than that of the Olympic champions.

The following year, the *chu jin*, or second degree candidates, from all the provinces are gathered in the empire's capital to compete in a third examination. This time the percentage of the chosen is a little larger. 3 to 400 is usually the number of recruits required to fill the ranks of the bureaucracy. These gentlemen bear the title of *tsin shi* and may expect to receive an appointment in the course of time.

They have now gained a firm foothold on the official ladder, and if they can apply their intelligence in practical ways, they may advance to the highest offices, even the Imperial Grand Council.

Before they are appointed as district magistrates or something like it, there are still some strands of laurel to be won. For this, all the *tsin shi* are gathered in the emperor's own palace for the fourth test. His Majesty hands out the examination subjects in person. This time the intent is to bring out the best literary talents, and therefore special weight is laid to the elegance of language and knowledge of the classical literature. The emperor appoints 20 to 30 of the most talented as Members of the Hanlin Academy.

The Hanlin Academy is an institution that has been as closely tied to the emperor's person in Chinese history as the purple to Western monarchs. The whole nation considers its members the leaders in the literary world. They function as the permanently appointed poets and official historians of the imperial court. They do not need to win the approbation of *demimonde* ladies for a seat in the Academy, nor the votes of envious colleagues, or the goodwill of influential personages as so many of their "immortal" brothers in France.

No. In Hanlin, an unknown laborer's son can sit beside the son of a governor in the proud knowledge that he sits there solely because of his talents.

And now there is only one mark of distinction left. The sequence of intellectual trials ends with the emperor every third year announcing a *Chuang-yuen*, which is something



The marble entrance gate leading in to the Hanlin Academy and the Examination Hall in Peking.

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like the English poet laureate. It is almost impossible for a European to imagine the honors that the Chinese shower on this prince of the intellectual realm – the chosen one out of 400 million fellow citizens. The champion's hometown is forever listed in the annals of history. Herald's are sent out in all directions to announce the appointment and, so that the coming generations always may know his name, a statue with his name and hometown inscribed upon it is placed in the Hanlin Academy's garden. In this manner the nation has kept a manifest record of its *chang-yuen* for the last several centuries.

China has never had a university in the European sense, nor any other organized school system. All knowledge is obtained from private schools or by independent study. I will still claim that the examination system gives more protection for learning than if each emperor had been an Augustus and every state councilor a Maeceneas.

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The Chinese officials, or *mandarins*,\* as they are called by the Europeans – and not infrequently in a derisive tone – form the governing aristocracy of the world's oldest and largest nation. They are appointed to govern by the will of the people – not by birthright, but by right of talent.

These powerful personages, for whom the common people make way with such timorous deference when they

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\* Mandarin is a European term derived from the Portuguese word *mandar* – to command.



pass by in their sedan chairs followed by an impressive entourage, these high and mighty gentlemen, are not noblemen by inheritance. Nor do they owe their station to the emperor's favor or the votes of their fellow citizens. No, they are self-selected, and the people view them with even more respect because they know that they have arrived at their position in society by their own exertions.

It is a class that is recruited from all the layers of society, since every Chinese is allowed to compete for even the empire's highest offices. Whether he is the son of a viceroy or a simple farmer, he has an equal chance.

When I say that *every* Chinese is allowed to compete, this is not quite correct. There are exceptions, and these are for the sons of prostitutes, executioners, prison guards, and barbers and actors. There are many reasons for this apparent injustice. The fear that heritable inclinations might affect performance in office is probably the most likely, especially for the first three abovementioned classes.

The highest and most influential officials usually come from the middle class, or even lower, as f. ex. Li Hung-chang – the nation's most brilliant representative in this century – and his brother Li Han-chang, the former viceroy in Canton. They are sons of a poor woodcutter.

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What can be more in accordance with real democratic thought – equal chances for all!

At least, here is a country where wealth cannot entitle the owner to a seat in the government. This is a country where even the emperor himself cannot give the least official office to an incompetent favorite. Nor is it permitted a more or less enlightened mass of voters to hand over the nation's most important positions of trust to addleheaded agitators.

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The erroneous conceptions that the Western nations commonly have about the Chinese government also include

The Head of State.

or "The Son of Heaven," as the Europeans sometimes mockingly call this ruler of one fourth of the earth's population, does not play the role of either a despot or an impotent harem sultan.

The emperor of China does not hold a sinecure position any more than do the provincial governors. What the governors must be for their provinces, the emperor must be for the whole realm. This high office is the most burdensome and responsible that can be held by any human being.

*Huáng-chang*, or His Imperial Majesty, which is the usual Chinese term for the ruler, is in theory regarded as the chosen representative of Heaven here on earth – or "Ruler by God's Mercy," as it is commonly expressed in Europe – but *nota bene*, not because of his birth.

From ancient times it has been emphasized that no human being has any god-given right to the throne by inheritance. Not even the sons of its latest occupant. This fundamental

principle has often had more than theoretical import despite all the power and influence that the late emperor's family has possessed.

The nation never knows with certainty who will be their next emperor.

On his deathbed, or by testament, the reigning emperor has the right to name his successor, but it is only by a good and just administration that his designee can prove his divine right. Only when the new emperor has won the respect of the people by conscientiously following the prescripts laid down in Confucius' political testament and has ensured the realm peace and good times will the nation regard him as *Fung-tien*, God's chosen one – the Son of Heaven.

The philosopher Mencius, who lived ca. 300 years before Christ, expressed this principle as follows: "The emperor certainly has got his mandate from Heaven, but if he does not perform his duties, Heaven withdraws its mandate, and it is not only the people's right, but their duty, to place another man on the throne."

*Vox dei* and *vox populi* has always been considered synonymous.

The emperor usually appoints one of his sons to be his successor, but it need not be the oldest or the youngest. The impractical and unjust right of primogeniture is completely unknown in China.

The present dynasty has in a couple of instances been exceptionally lucky in the imperial succession – with regard to both physical and intellectual qualifications.



### Emperor Kang Hi

Reproduction of a drawing by the Jesuit Louis le Comte,  
a member of Louis XIV's delegation in 1691.

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The second ruler of the family was Emperor Kang Hi, a contemporary of Louis XIV. He was preferred over two older brothers and governed with strength and wisdom from 1659 to 1722. It was he who brought all the Tartar peoples on China's northern border in under Chinese suzerainty and civilizing influence. The thousand years old struggle between the Chinese and the Tartars thus came to an end.

Though Kang Hi was himself a foreigner, a Tartar, he won the love and esteem of his subjects like few of the native born emperors. When he died, the Chinese were confident that he was *Fung-tien*, God's chosen one, and the Manchu dynasty was set on a firm foundation.

Kang Hi's grandson Kien Lung was preferred over his two younger brothers. He followed in his grandfather's footsteps. After governing for 61 years, he stepped down from the throne and appointed his second son Kia King as his successor.

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I have here attempted to describe the Chinese governmental system in broad outlines. Of course the system has its defects – and great defects indeed, since it is only the work of men. But we must admit that it is a system of government that has made the Chinese the world's largest nation and has more or less achieved the goal of affording the greatest happiness to the largest number, and we must admit that such a system may be worth studying in greater depth than has been the case so far.

Most Orientalists have assumed the strict observation of the Fourth Commandment to be the primary reason for the remarkable growth and endurance of the Chinese society. I do not entirely agree with this.

The deep respect and love for the parents certainly has strengthened the force of authority to a great extent, but if the patriarchal principle had been passed on from the family to the whole society in toto, the Chinese state would have disintegrated into rubble, just like ancient Rome and Egypt.

In China a son is never justified in disobeying his parents' commands, be they ever so brutal and tyrannical, but one of the oldest basic tenets for the government of the state is, as I have stated above, that the people not only are justified, but are obliged to depose an unjust or incompetent ruler.

It is this large deviation from the patriarchal regimen that has forestalled the danger of the society being destroyed by government mismanagement.

I believe the reason for the remarkable coherence and endurance of the Chinese race is due to 3 basic principles in the empire's political system:

- I. Moral persuasion is preferable to physical force.
- II. The most intelligent and competent men are essential for government service.
- III. The people have the right to depose an emperor who allows poor or tyrannical administration under his rule.

And the institution that has given the Chinese constitution the necessary vitality is – the examination system.

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## Chapter Two

### The Chinese and his queue.

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**A** Chinese! This word immediately calls forth in our minds the picture of a peculiar individual in a long colorful silk gown, yellow face with slanted eyes, a long braided queue hanging down his back, and holding a fan in his hand.

This is a more or less correct image, though vivid colors as in the West mostly belong to feminine toilette, and the facial color can be quite variable – from the marble pallor of the rich and aristocratic families to the sunburned coolies' copper-tone yellow.

A large photograph taken during my stay in central China still stands before me on my writing table. It shows my teacher in the Chinese language, the author Ho Chao-kuin, sitting in his study conversing with the navigation officer on His Chinese Majesty's gunboat "*Ling-Fêng*."



*Ho Chao-Kuin*

*H. T. Suckman (Hawol)*

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The better looking man is not the last named person, but the "yellow heathen" in his dark blue silk gown, fan in hand, finely formed, white face, horizontal intelligent dreamy eyes, and his queue down the back.

Ho can count his ancestors several centuries back in time, so there is no doubt he is a full-blooded Chinese. I have seen many like him; nothing like the bright yellow color\* and 45 degree slanted eyes that Europeans like to think is the hall-marks of the Chinese.

Though the slant of the eyes of most Chinese is very slight, the native portrait artists like to exaggerate it – for traditional artistic reasons, and it is therefore excusable that Western artists depict the Chinese like they do.

But we would like to know a little more about the queue. This treasured hair style is of quite modern origin. Two and a half centuries ago, the queue was an unknown fashion in the Celestial Empire, but when the Manchu leader Shun-Chih ascended China's throne in 1644 he immediately issued a decree that ordered that all male Chinese citizens should adopt the conquerors' hairstyle – the queue – or be treated as rebels.

The order was carried out, but only after a very stiff-necked opposition from the inhabitants of South China. When they no longer could resist, the queue was adopted, but they rolled it up in a loop around their heads and hid it under a turban. This style still is quite common among farmers and laborers in the southern provinces.

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\* The Chinese who emigrate always belong to the lower classes, whose ancestors for centuries have cultivated the ground under the burning sun.

However, the dislike of the imposed hair style has in this century been transformed into fervent devotion. We now see how Chinese immigrants in America have been naturalized into American citizens, but still maintain their beloved queues. Yes, and their children and grandchildren too, even when these have been brought up in American schools.

The only compromise they sometimes accept is to hide the queue down the back inside their American clothes. I have seen one solitary American Chinese with shortcut hair, but that was such an extremely rare exception that it can be ignored for all practical purposes.

Several Christian missionaries, especially Catholics, dress in the Chinese fashion with natural or fake queues in order to win adherents.

For the Catholic Fathers this is shrewd, since they usually are educated men who study and practice the proper ways to wear their queues and fine new Chinese clothes after the Chinese fashion, but the Protestant missionaries, who are largely recruited from the broad layers of society look, mildly put, ridiculous, when these gentlemen, who may have come from a Scandinavian or American farm community, appear dressed in Chinese gowns and fake queues. They give rise to general mirth among both the Chinese and the Europeans.

There is nothing that can bring the phlegmatic Chinese to a boiling rage quicker than to mess with his queue. *Noli me tangere* applies just as much to this hairstyle as to the rest of him. Every day you can see your Chinese servant undo his long braid, wash his head with warm water, give his hair a

couple of strokes with oil to give it shine, and then begin to braid it again.

If the man is old, or his hair less luxuriant than wished, silk threads are wound with it to make the queue look thicker and longer. But when days of sorrow arrive, the deception is discovered, because then the black silk must be exchanged for white – the color of mourning – and later on, in half-sorrow, with blue. Small children, girls as well as boys, usually have the symbol of joy – a red silk ribbon – braided into their thin queues.

The better off usually have their hair done twice a week, but laborers and farmers make do with once a week. The beggars are less particular; every other or third month will do, if even that. The skull is shaved in front and in back so that only a band of hair is left from which the queue is to be braided. No soap is used in the operation – only warm water, and their triangular razors seem to make easy work of it. The stiff bristles are scraped away like melted butter.

Chinese seamen usually wind their queues around their heads while they work, and if there is a strong wind blowing, they also tie them over their caps.

On warships, the barbering is usually done *en masse* every Friday afternoon. Small stools are placed in rows on the forecastle and the sailors dress each other's hair.

When they are done, it often happens that one of the barbers has tied two men's braids together and gets them to rise up together and walk off in opposite directions. Ouch! The eyes of the victims flash angrily, but that soon gives way

to laughter with a wink that says: "Just wait until next Friday!"

Chinese barbers rarely keep a "salon" for their customers' convenience. The purificatory rites most often take place in the open streets. The barber carries his paraphernalia with him on a bamboo rod, and when a customer calls for his assistance, it only takes a few seconds to set up shop.

The red-painted chest that hangs from one end of the rod has several drawers in which the barber keeps his knives, etc. The chest also serves as a seat for the customer being served. On the other end of the rod hangs a kind of brazier with burning charcoal and a brass bowl with hot water suspended over it.

Though the queue now can be said to be the national mark of the Chinese, there are many who do not wear them. Among these are the Buddhist priests, who shave their heads quite smooth all over, and the Taoist monks, who let their hair grow long and tie it up in a roll on top. This also was the Chinese style before the Manchus came. The men of the independent mountain tribe Miao-tse in South China also wear their hair long as a sign of their independence.

It has always been customary to let the hair grow long during national uprisings. The imperial loyalists therefore also called the Taipingers\* *Chang Mao* – the longhaired rebels – when they adopted the old national hairstyle *à la* Taoist monks.

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\* The Taiping Rebellion began in 1848 by a Chinese influenced by the missionaries, who thought himself called by God to establish an empire of peace here on earth. The revolt was quelled in 1864.



An itinerant barber.



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In one of the earliest proclamations that the Taiping emperor issued after his victorious entry into Nanking he directed the following accusation against the Peking government: "The Chinese have worn their hair long since ancient times, but the Manchus forced the whole nation to cut their hair and wear a queue. We want to liberate you. The majority of the people in this country are Chinese, and still – how can you be so foolish as to shave your heads to please the Tartars? How is it possible that you can be content to be the Manchus' slaves and dogs? Etc., etc.

Strong words in this proclamation, but it seems a little odd to put the queue hairstyle at the top of the list of complaints against the Manchu government, especially since the nation has adopted the fashion of its conquerors with such enthusiasm.

We also find that founder of every dynasty in China has ordered a small change in dress fashions. One thing is certain: if the Manchu dynasty falls to a native Chinese dynasty, the Chinese hair queue will soon only be seen in museums.

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## Chapter Three

### Chinese gruesomeness?

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**S**ince I on my extensive travels through different parts of the world have had occasion to study different peoples and the Europeans' "civilizing influence" in their colonies, I am always uncomfortable when a major periodical or newspaper sully its columns with more or less gruesome and heartless accounts of social life in non-Christian nations.

It is especially offensive when mission magazines or Sunday school brochures give space to such articles. They can hardly have any ennobling or benevolent influence on the tender and sensitive strings in a child's heart.

If the purpose of these more or less truthful depictions of life among the heathen is to move our women and small children make larger offerings to the mission cause, I will only remark that if God views the missionaries' activities in

heathen lands with approval, He will surely know how to encourage kindhearted people to offer their mites without resorting to such doubtful means.

From the numerous articles that are printed in some publications about the Chinese we would come to think that the yellow race completely lacks all the human and noble sentiments that distinguish the best elements of the white race.

Chinese gruesomeness – especially toward lawbreakers – seems to be a very popular theme, and many hair-raising stories about this that could stir the indignation of the most blasé reader have been printed.

I do not claim that all these correspondents do not believe in the truth of their reports, since the gift of imagination can be very strong even in moments when calm objectivity is most needed. However, I must say that I have never been a witness to a gruesome incident in my travels crisscrossing the Chinese empire, and I hope that no one will accuse me of having traveled with my eyes closed.

I once observed an execution near Hong Kong. Nineteen of the pirates, who in 1890 captured the English steamer "*Namoa*," were to suffer their well-deserved punishment. Only a strong desire to explore everything I encountered motivated me to accompany a couple of friends to observe this bloody scene.

It was not a comfortable sight, but I saw no gruesomeness; quite the contrary.

Friends or the prison guards had dulled the prisoners' senses with opium, and the criminals seemed to hardly

understand the gravity of their situation. A head rolled across the sand for each swing of the executioner's sharp sword. Not a single missed stroke.

But another onlooker – the correspondent for an American newspaper – made some quite different observations. He describes in as much detail as possible for his readers how the executioner with devilish cruelty slices piece by piece off the half-dead malefactors' bodies; first the nose, then the ears, then the hands, the feet, etc., etc., until the poor wretches finally receives the last cut.

I can easily imagine that more than one of the paper's readers has cursed these yellow heathen that seem to have the nerve to imitate the old French or Spanish inquisitors, these zealous servants of God, who in His honor whipped innocent women and children to death, drove nails into arms and legs of suspected "heretics," crushed their limbs with wooden mallets, or subjected them to "the wooden horse" or "Spanish boots."

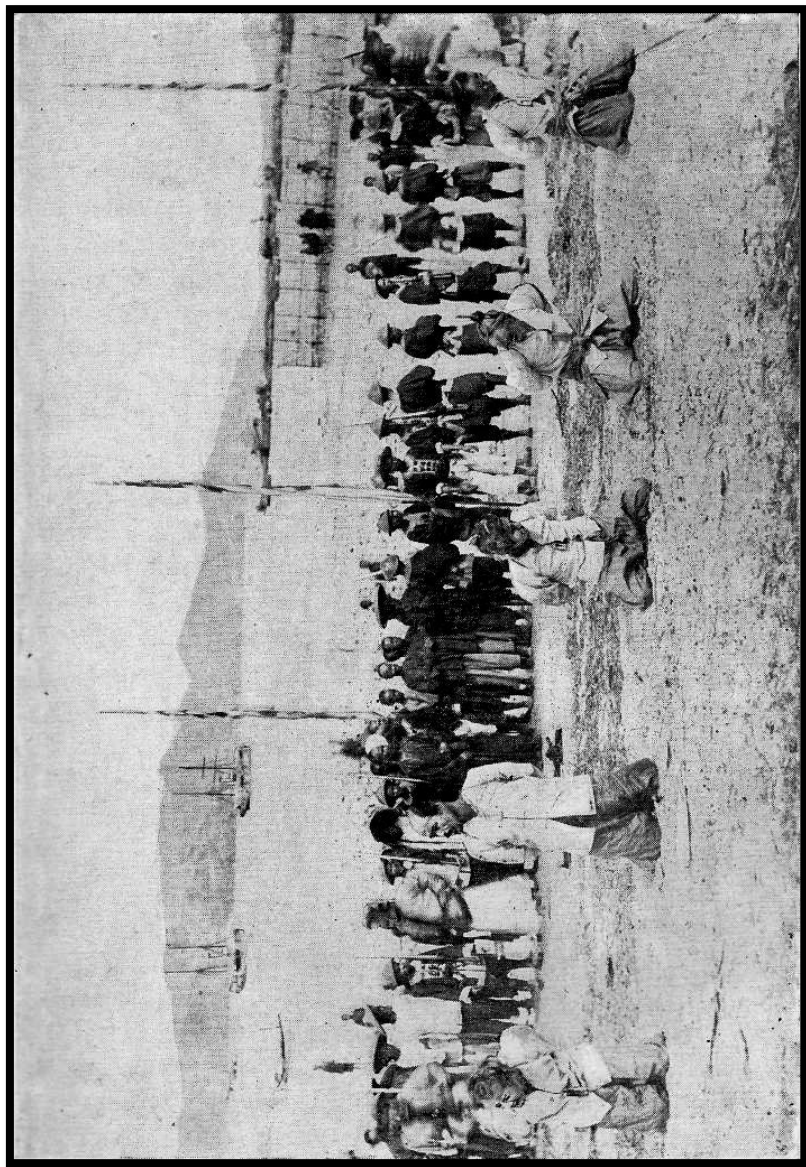
The American reporter had most likely heard tales about "*Ling-chi*," or "death by a thousand cuts," that the Chinese government exacted for parricide – but *nota bene* – many centuries ago. The reporter probably thought that here was a suitable occasion to demonstrate his erudition.

Dismembering the body before the final execution was done away with during the Sui Dynasty (589 – 618 A.D.).

But *Ling-chi* is still nominally in effect, since the Chinese government has found it necessary to distinguish between a common villain – and a son who murders his own parents.\*

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\* [The "death of a thousand cuts" was very much still in force. Also death by the *bastinado*, burying families alive, etc. There are photographs.]



Execution of the "*Namoa*" pirates.

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The latter are usually sentenced to *Ling-chi*, but it is carried out by the executioner carving a character that means a thousand into the murderer's breast. This is meant to symbolize that such a frightful crime really ought to be punished by cutting the culprit's body into a thousand pieces.

However, it is said that this execrable process was literally carried out once at the place of executions in Canton, though *after* the head had been separated from the body. Fortunately, patricide or matricide is very rare in China.

On the whole, I think it will be difficult to find proof that the Chinese have more gruesome inclinations than us Europeans.

The Holy Inquisition has been mentioned; this institution fortunately has been unique in this world, but I will also permit myself to refresh a little of Europe's judicial history in the last several centuries.

We will see that *Kanzler* Leist and *Reichskommissar* Peters of German-African fame are not aberrations from their ancestors of the white race. When discussing social conditions, it is always well to have something to compare with.

The judicial system that rules in China at present are essentially the same as 2 – 300 years ago, and from within this period of time I will bring up some illustrations of European justice administration.

In 1567 the knight Wilhelm von Grumbach, who had been declared outlaw due to his fight with the clergy in Würzburg, was executed in Gotha.

His sentence read in part: "Although he had deserved a more severe punishment, by the innate mercy of the Prince

Elector of Saxony it was reduced such that he only (!) was to be quartered alive." An eyewitness reported: "The executioners cut out his heart and struck him in the mouth with it, whereupon they cut him into four parts."

Most of us remember well from history class how the "Christ murderers," the Jews, were treated in the Middle Ages – especially when the Christian enforcers of the law needed their money.

As an example, a rich Jew was hung up by his arms until he died six days later. This happened in Paris in 1598.

A farmer in Voigtland, who murdered his family in 1606, was pinched with white hot tongs, his hands were cut off, and then he was broken on the wheel and finally quartered.

Theft was often punished with death. In the town of Halle, where a quite remarkable system of justice ruled in older times, this happened regularly. Life was not dear in those days it seems. We read in a report from 1528: "It seems incomprehensible that it was possible that the authorities would fulfill the wish of a poor wretch to be hung together with his friend in order to "keep him company." It is stated that the lawbreaker who wished to accompany his friend to the gallows had been sentenced to exile from the country.

In 1666 a criminal judge by the name of Karpzov died in Leipzig. This brave man could pride himself of two quite extraordinary achievements; he had read the Bible cover to cover 53 times and as a judge he had handed down more than 20,000 death sentences – most of them for witchcraft. His writings had a quite an extraordinary influence on the "justice administration" of that time.

In a magazine published by the Hamburg Historical Society, we find a report written by an Englishman about an execution he witnessed in Hamburg in 1616. A murderer was "broken on the wheel," as it was called. That is, he was tied spread-eagled across a wagon wheel and his long bones broken with a cudgel, whereupon the whole was hoisted up on a pole and left there until the victim died. In the square outside the high court in Hamburg, the Englishman saw 20 poles with heads stuck on top.

The judges in Hamburg at that time also had invented a kind of slow burning with damp hay and tallow in a barrel so that it could take up to four hours before death occurred.

The execution of the mayor of Braunschweig, Henning von Brabant, was particularly dreadful. His enemies charged him with being "the Devil's ally," and delivered him to the executioner to be murdered in so frightful a manner that even the Spanish Inquisition at its worst could hardly have surpassed it. Brabant was mutilated in an unspeakably cannibalistic manner during the execution, "while the judge enjoyed wine and candies and made sure that Brabant was tortured in the most inhuman way."

The horrible justice system of this epoch has cast its shadows far into the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Certainly torture was eliminated in many places, but otherwise justice was meted out in the same spirit right up to the end of the century.

The "regicide" Damiens, who had inflicted a very minor knife wound on Louis XV, was torn apart by four horses!

In 1745 several executions were carried out in Munich every week. Everywhere in Germany, felons were decapi-

tated, burned, quartered, broken on the wheel, and hanged. Even in the 19<sup>th</sup> century people were burned alive – in Berlin! Cotta's *Das Morgen-Blatt* reported from this city that the arsonists Johann Peter Horst and Friederike Luise Deliz had been burned 28 May 1813.

Still in 1837 a woman was broken on the wheel because she had murdered her husband.

The Spanish and French bullfights and the Portuguese cock fights continuing right into the present can also be mentioned in this regard.

*Summa summarum* – Let us first sweep before our own doors.

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Many strange and grisly things are reported to have happened in the Celestial Empire, and Europeans often judge the conditions out there by what they read, but the reality is quite different.

We remember how the heads of the Chinese generals rolled everywhere during the last war, but such "unpleasant events" did not prevent most of these gentlemen from living comfortably with their families after the war ended, which is, for example, the case with General Yeh, who lost the Battle of Pingyang.

A General Wei, who bore a great deal of the responsibility for the defeat, was twice reported to have been executed

by the *Peking Gazette*. It is possible that this scoundrel has finally met his doom, but it certainly is not assured.\*

The *Peking Gazette* is on the whole a dangerous paper for people who are inclined to take its reports literally. This official newspaper is – like most official news media in Europe – often used to proclaim "official truths" to pacify the common folk.

I thus once read a letter from a lady to a mission magazine, wherein she among other things related that the Chinese were so gruesome that they executed mentally ill people, if they in the grip of a crazy fit had committed a murder!

And from whence did she get this information? From the *Peking Gazette*, of course.

It not infrequently happens that magistrates in their reports to the government describe especially infamous criminals as mentally ill, since otherwise a shadow of guilt would fall onto themselves. The local officials are responsible for the behavior of the people in their care. If normal people committed such crimes, it would show that the officials had not fulfilled their duties to teach their people civic responsibilities – or so the reasoning goes.

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## Torture

Torture is still practiced in China, but it occurs so seldom and places so much responsibility on the judge's shoulders

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\* He had cheated his soldiers of their pay.

that he only takes to such barbaric means of obtaining a confession as a very last resort.

Otherwise a poor mandarin may often be tempted to let the scoundrels taste a little of the thumbscrew or being hung up by the ears, since the sons of the Celestial Empire are justly accused of not being enamored of the truth.

It is one of the major national faults that seem to be inbred. It is an exception to hear a Chinese speak what we call the truth, and the young mandarin's future may be at stake if he cannot get the malefactor to confess.

I read a story about a young magistrate whose apprenticeship test was to bring a hardened criminal to confess.

He tried all possible tricks in vain, thumbscrew, flogging, all in vain.

The young mandarin thought of the embarrassment that he would cause his parents, his future with the viceroy's red button on his hat, and resolutely threw himself down before the rogue's feet and begged him with the most touching expressions to confess.

And finally! The hardened criminal's heart softened, he could not resist such an unexpected appeal – and the future viceroy's honor was saved.

Flogging occurs not infrequently, but there are so many regulations and exceptions governing the judge's course of proceeding that this punishment loses almost all aspect of barbarity.

Thus Chapter VI of "Instructions for judges" exempts the following individuals from flogging: 1. Old people, 2. Young

boys,\* 3. Sickly persons, 4. Wretches who are hungry and half-naked, – "because to punish a beggar, who is hungry, frozen, and without friends to care for him afterward, is to kill him at the same time."

I would like to cite more of these instructions, but the above illustrates what I want to show.

The Chinese punishments for crimes may seem severe to us at first glance, but in the first place they do not have as delicate nerves as we, and secondly the sentences are seldom carried out by the letter, and thirdly crimes are so rarely committed in China that the Europeans might consider re-introducing some of the 18<sup>th</sup> century punishments, if they would lead to the same result.

And we must remember that a system of punishments that is suitable for one area of the world may not necessarily be expedient in another.

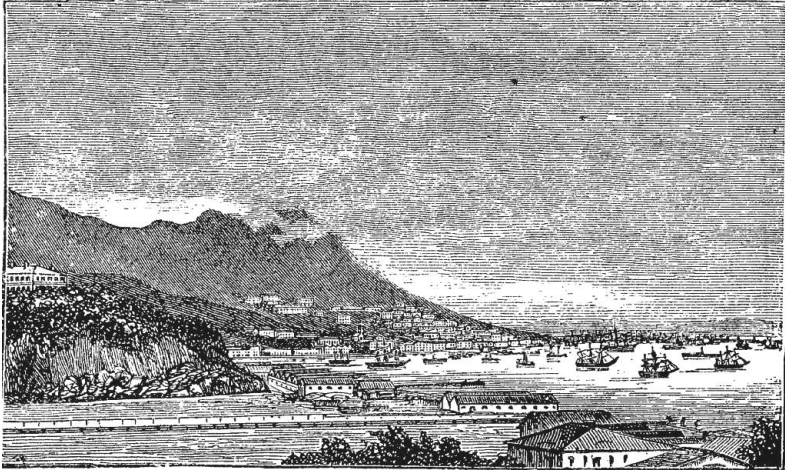
We have an excellent illustration of this in the English colony Hong Kong. Most of the criminals from the surrounding Chinese provinces have gathered here. The viceroy of Canton stated in a statistic for 1891 that ca. 2,000 individuals who have avoided the long arm of the Chinese authorities live in Hong Kong.

This is because all kinds of villains can rest here in safety and comfort. When the gangs return from their geographical research expeditions into other people's pockets or houses,

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\* And, of course, all women. Flogging of female criminals is hardly known in any country outside Europe. An exception that ought to be mentioned is the revolting flogging of the wives of East-African soldiers in Cameroon in 1894. But there it was the German *Kanzler* Leist who meted out "justice."

they can go gently to sleep in their safe havens since the English "*Habeas Corpus*" act holds its protective hand over the sinners.



Hong Kong Harbor

If the scoundrels are occasionally caught, they are hauled up before the court and declared "not guilty" by the jury due to lack of evidence, since the sly Chinese make sure that evidence is not found, or it disappears before the trial. They have no respect for the sanctity of the oath and certainly not before "barbarians." The gang that captured the steamship "*Namoa*" 10 December 1890, like all others in South China, laid their plans in Hong Kong. They bought weapons, ammunition, and went aboard as passengers – and the drama took place. There could not be a safer place for them than Hong Kong – and right enough, "*Namoa's*" captors returned to this city after the deed.



The English police occasionally caught one of them, but had to release them for lack of evidence. The gang then again made a side trip outside Hong Kong's boundaries, but this time their countrymen caught up with them, and they did not get away, but the thumbscrew relieved Canton of this pest.

\*

Destitution and misery will, of course, occasionally arise in a large and densely populated country such as China.

The reason usually is flooding by the large rivers. The Shantung province has been especially afflicted by these events due to the periodic floods on *Huang Ho*, "the Yellow River."<sup>\*</sup>

It is not any longer ago than 1889 that we last heard from it, and to the China mission's credit it shall be stated that it did all it could to persuade the Western nations to each offer its contribution to the assistance efforts.

However, if we take the trouble to read through the *Peking Gazette* for the same year, we find that the Chinese themselves did not stand back in the efforts to help their brethren. It seems that they had just as much love for their neighbors as the Christian nations. The newspapers are full of reports of magnificent gifts from provinces that had not had any previous connections to Shantung, and to the credit of the Chinese mandarin class, which is consistently depicted as a pack of thieves, it should also be mentioned that the now deceased Governor Chang Yao was so poor that the state had

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<sup>\*</sup> Huang Ho is therefore also known as "China's Sorrow."

to pay for his funeral and his sons' upbringing though millions of dollars for relief of the flood victims had rolled through his hands.

Every city in China of any size has since time out of mind had public orphanages, homes for the elderly, soup and rice kitchens, sleeping barracks for the homeless, schools for the blind, hospitals with free care, scholarships for needy students, etc.

It is possible that the assistance offered is not always sufficient – and remarkably enough, this also happens in Europe, but is never mentioned for comparison when the miseries in China are described.

It also happens that the donors' good intentions are frustrated by the deceits of the charitable agencies – this also occurs in Europe.

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And finally a question for the individuals who try to blacken the good elements in the Chinese national character: Is not one's life the highest sacrifice a person can place on the altar of love?

But I have never heard it mentioned that China is the only country that raises sons who often give their lives for their families – or their fellow citizens.

You, who steal the nation's good name, have you heard that a son often assumes his father's guilt and goes to be executed in his place?

Have you never heard of sons who for money assume the name of a criminal in order to provide their parents a carefree old age?

Are you not aware of the practice that the authorities sometimes imprison his father or mother when the son has committed a crime and fled from the punishment?

The magistrates know very well that there fortunately is rarely a son so hardened that he will not return and surrender to the hands of justice when he hears that his parents will be held in jail until he returns.

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All Chinese laws are carefully grouped under main headings. Many of them are as old as the administrative system. The law of criminal punishments is one of the oldest. It was established by the founder of the Han Dynasty.\*

The specific punishments have been more or less modified under the later dynasties, but the spirit of the law has remained the same up to the present.

From the humane and lawbreaker friendly point of view that we Europeans take at the end of this century, I must admit that many of the Chinese punishments are severe – even gruesome, but all European consuls and diplomats who have been stationed in China know that the people do not want them changed and consider them extraordinarily mild.

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\* The Han Dynasty is one of the best that China has had – 200 B.C. to 200 A.D.

The masses only demand that the punishments of the law shall be executed with equal severity and impartiality for all classes of society.

Complete editions are sold in every bookstore for a few cents. A Chinese judge therefore does not consider it a valid excuse when a lawbreaker claims he was ignorant of the law's provisions – since in contrast to the Spanish and Italians almost all Chinese can read.

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## Chapter Four

### The social position of women in China.

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**M**any dark chapters have been written about the low standing of the woman in the greater Chinese society.

In wealthy and eminent circles, she is generally portrayed as a pretty plaything, something her opium smoking lord can view with sensual pleasure while she fans away mosquitoes from his feverish brow.

In the poor homes of the workers, she is just a higher ranking beast of burden. Early awake and late to bed, always coping with fetching water, plowing, and crying children – without even the slightest ray of sunshine ever penetrating into her loveless home, which she must share with one or more sister wives.

Whether a Chinese woman belongs to a poor or rich opium smoker, she is considered to be a dull-witted, ignorant

creature, who is absolutely not suited to be any man's partner in life.

One "authority" states that: "On the whole, the social position of women is so deplorable that these fair disciples of Buddha often prefer death to prolonging so miserable an existence, and even if they are saved from taking this step, most Chinese women earnestly wish that in their next life they will be born as creatures of the other sex."

That a couple of hundred millions of female creatures should be doomed to such a miserable life must bring tears to the eyes of every woman in "the Western paradise" – especially those whose intellectual and physical advantages can bring the lords of creation to obey instantly their least commands.

I have been very interested in the question of women's standing both here at home and in the East and I must be permitted to state that the perception I have gained regarding the social standing of women in China through conversations with family heads, from the common sailors up to my English or French speaking friends in the higher strata of society, by many visits in Chinese homes, and in other ways – this perception is very different from the dark social conditions generally described to the reading public in the West.

Among the working classes the wives are of course required to take part in heavy as well as light work in the home as well as in the fields, but I have never seen a woman steer the plow though I have traveled through hundreds of villages. Nor have I seen them occupied in any task that every farmwife in the West does not also perform daily.

And if a Chinese woman is obliged to work hard for her "daily rice," she is at least certain she will not see an intoxicated master come staggering into the house late in the evening, overturning tables and chairs, waking up the children with his curses and beating his "house slave," something that happens all too often in European homes.

Habitual drunkenness is an almost unknown vice, and opium is much too dear to be enjoyed by the working classes, except at every "feast day."

There is no civilized society where the husband has more legal power over his wife – in some cases even life or death is within his discretion – but wife-beating is still unknown. The quiet, peaceful character of the Chinese male is a guarantee against misuse of his unrestricted power within his family.

A man, who from childhood on has been accustomed to cheerfully and punctiliously carry out the least of his duties; a man who habitually controls his physical movements according to custom and avoids any breach of etiquette – inside the family as well as before strangers – is naturally less given to flagrant cruelty or hasty violence than the more warlike and less formal Europeans.

"A woman must obey her father while she is a child, her husband after the wedding, and as a widow be guided by her sons," says Confucius.

In Europe and America, we men also have authority on our side regarding the position of women in society. From childhood on it is impressed upon them to be obedient, and when the minister at the altar ties "the bonds which only death can dissolve" he again with fulsome voice admonishes

her with the words of St. Paul: "Wives, be submissive to your husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him her lord."

However, despite Confucius and St. Paul, we have thousands of "slippers heroes"\* both in the West and the East.

If a Chinese woman does not succeed in bringing her man to heel during their honeymoon, she will generally have occasion to exercise her power when she becomes a mother-in-law, and if she attains the dignity of a grandmother, the whole family usually must dance to her pipe.

We have an excellent example in the old empress dowager of China. She has no legal basis to support her claim to authority. She was not even Emperor Hsien Feng's wife – only his concubine, but this intelligent lady been the dominant power in the imperial palace for the last thirty-five years.†

If we are to assess the general social position of women in China, I think I am justified in stating that the Chinese woman – especially among the lower classes – leads a far more pleasant existence than her European sisters.

"But the Chinese live in polygamy!" a lady objected when I on one occasion compared the positions of the Chinese and European women in society.

"That cannot be denied," I said, "it is an arrangement the Chinese moral teachers have permitted for practical reasons founded on a deep knowledge of human nature."

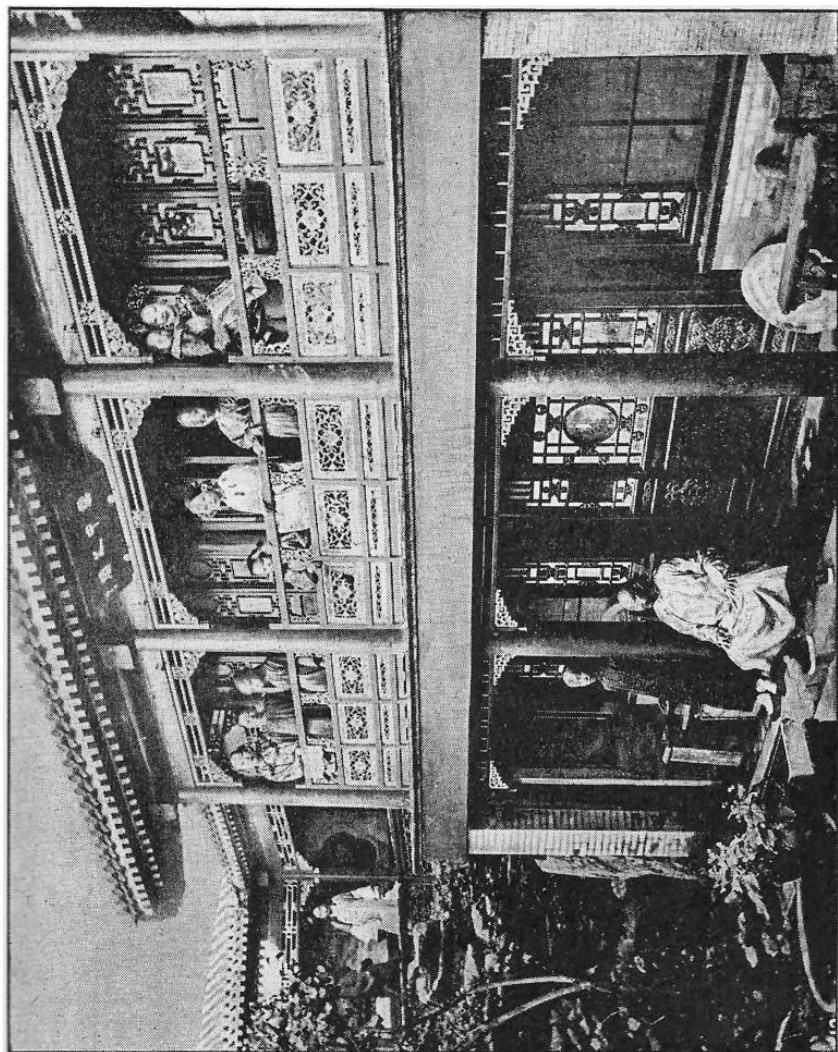
In Europe and America, we also live in polygamy – and maybe even to a greater extent than the Chinese. Perhaps just

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\* [Norwegian term for "henpecked."]

† Emperor Hsien Feng died in 1862.





A Chinese home.

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because our ecclesiastical and civil laws forbid it, since forbidden fruit usually taste best. And perhaps also because our Christian laws to much too great an extent exempt the man from obligations to support others than his official wife and her children.

Monogamy is an ideal, but regrettably few people are idealists. What misery has not the hidden and forbidden polygamy caused! How many innocent beings must not every year lose its life because we have erected unnatural moral rules, and with Christian benevolence we heap shame and scorn on mother and child.

Let your veil of hypocrisy fall, Europeans and Americans. Hundreds of thousands female prostitutes put the lie to your official monogamy!

Polygamy is in accordance with Chinese moral and civil laws, and it has to a significant degree prevented venereal diseases and other fruits of immorality from undermining the nation's vitality.

But we must not think that a Chinese can have several legitimate wives at one time. No, it is only our Christian European princes that Our Lord has blessed with such privileges. In China, one cannot be married to the "right" and to the "left" hand; one must be content with just one wife.\*

However, it is permitted to have concubines, provided the man in question can support them. Legally, the

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\* [C-A is wrong here. In Europe, a "morganatic," or "left hand," marriage meant that the wife and her children could not inherit the husband's title and official privileges, but it certainly was a valid marriage with no other wives of any kind permitted.]

concubines' children are considered to belong to the wife and have the same legal rights as her own children.

Of course, it is only the more well-off Chinese men who can afford to keep concubines. The workers usually have all they can do with providing food for one family.

But, even if the rich has the means to support a harem, the men commonly refrain from it due to consideration for their wives.

Thus an author wrote about a wealthy and distinguished mandarin who was visited by an old friend, who wondered a little about seeing only one woman in the official's magnificent home and asked why he did not take a couple of pretty young concubines now, when his wife had become so old and wrinkled.

The mandarin became very offended and replied: "What do you take me for? Should I leave my wonderful wife – she, who sacrificed her flower of youth to me?"

The nation generally does not view polygamy with unmixed approval, except in the case when the wife remains childless, since it is self-evident that polygamy in any form whatever must cause sundry discord and misery in the home.

Concubines are mostly taken from the lower classes and are given over to the wealthy men in return for a material compensation. But however many beauties a man adds to his harem, as long as she lives his wife always take precedence in the home.

Because of this and for several other reasons, the wife's position in the household is not as disagreeable as might be surmised. It even often happens that the wife herself

encourages her husband to take concubines – in order to command a larger household and be surrounded by more subservient beings than otherwise would be the case.

Here is a little story that illustrates a similar, but much more commendable situation.

Once, in the time of the Taiping Rebellion, a young gentleman became engaged to his neighbor's daughter, and the day of the wedding had already been set, but unfortunately, the rebels on one of their forays came by the town where the young people lived and took the bridegroom prisoner.

In the camp of the enemy, their leader took a liking to him and adopted the young man as his son, since he was getting on in years and was childless.

Month after month passed, and when no reports about the captive came back to his bride, her parents proposed that she should become engaged to another man, but that the young lady would not hear of. Though the wedding ceremonies had not been fulfilled, she still felt herself bound to her lost fiancé.

Then one day her parents were surprised by a visit from the groom's grieving father. He had received a message from his son, saying that he not only had been adopted by a prominent warlord, but also that he was married to another woman.

The parents went into their daughter's room with this message and hoped that it would cause her to yield to their wishes.

But no, the faithful bride only said: "It does not matter. He probably can afford to support two wives, and if I cannot be his No. 1, I am willing to be his concubine."

This uncommon love and devotion moved the parents to tears, and the son's father wrote a long letter to inform him about his former bride's praiseworthy stance.

And what happened? The son's new wife went so far in her generosity toward her rival that she urged her husband to reward such a love by offering the discarded one his hand again.

Nor was this appeal in vain, but the night before he was to leave, the area was flooded from the river, which overtopped its banks. The floodwaters swept away his house, his possessions, and his wife. He alone was saved by climbing up onto the roof of the house until people could come to rescue him.

Poor and wretchedly dressed he set out on the road to his bride's home, where the unworthy was received with open arms, and the wedding was celebrated shortly thereafter.

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The nation is generally regarded as an extremely prosaic people, but that love still plays not a small role in married life is demonstrated by the thousands of romance novels filling up Chinese bookstores.

Nor is it the case that all Chinese girls grow up without any education other than that which pertains to housekeeping. Among the lower classes it is certainly very common that

girls can neither read nor write, but it is rare in the higher circles. They can usually master at least a few hundred characters and undoubtedly surpass their sisters in Spain or Portugal, where hardly two percent has any notion of the noble arts of literacy.

With regard to amusements, it is possible that Chinese women have fewer than the Europeans do.

For example, they can never be seen in a theater, since this is contrary to the etiquette. The "ladies" we sometimes see appear on the Chinese stage with 5 – 6 centimeter long feet are only boys dressed as women.

But I have often seen women of the lower classes as spectators at theater performances in rural villages, so there are exceptions to this rule also.

Even though men and women rarely meet, it is far from uncommon that the ladies invite each other to tea or lunch, and I do not think they fall behind their European sisters in relating scandalous stories and similarly interesting subjects.

As earlier mentioned, I do not know of any country in the civilized world, where the husband holds more legal sway over his wife. Chinese law is extremely one-sided in that regard. A husband has the right to divorce his wife for the following reasons: 1. Disobedience to father-in-law or mother-in-law, 2. Barrenness, 3. Infidelity, 4. Jealousy, 5. Leprosy, 6. Quarrelsomeness, 7. Thievery.

On the other hand there are no grounds that can justify a wife leaving her husband before death.

On the whole one must say that Confucius and the other great teachers have undervalued the good qualities of women

and thus are to a large degree responsible for the West's erroneous perception.

However, a little insight into Chinese homes will soon convince an impartial observer that the Chinese women's position in society is far from being as low and miserable as theoreticians in East and West have consigned them to.

All of the Chinese romantic literature expresses nothing but admiration for virtuous women. No author dares to give infidelity or immorality the flattering, exculpatory aura that is so favored by their French colleagues.

The high esteem in which the Chinese hold their chaste maidens and faithful wives is evidenced by the innumerable monuments in their honor, which are seen everywhere in China.

Let us end this chapter with one of the many Chinese tales about fidelity unto death.

Once upon a time a viceroy saw the wife of one of his subordinates and became totally enamored of her. He invited the woman to his palace, and she did not dare refuse the invitation.

When the viceroy saw the woman enter, he asked her to sing a little, but was answered:

"Out in the free nature the little sparrow twitters of its free will, but near the king of the birds it loses its courage. I am a woman of the people and do not fit in these grand surroundings."

The powerful lord smiled darkly and bade her spend the night in one of the apartments in the palace. "I will have my way with you later," he thought.



But when the viceroy came to her the next morning, she had strangled herself with a silk cord. In a letter that she had left on a table, she requested that she be buried next to her husband, with whom she had agreed that he would also seek death if she did not return on the same day.

However, the frustrated tyrant would not even comply with this simple request. He let them be buried next to each other, but a foot apart.

Later, a couple of trees grew up over the grave and their crowns bowed toward each other – a sign that the lovers had been rejoined in death.

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## Chapter Five

### The besetting vice of the Chinese.

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If I was asked to name the main vice of the Chinese people, I would without hesitation answer: gambling.

In China gambling is more common among all classes than in any other land, and it is not impossible that this passion for gambling also influences the European merchants out here; certainly a penchant for engaging in risky speculations is much too common among them.

The fever has raged most intensely in the English colony Hong Kong. It seems the main entertainment activity of the European youth is to spend their Sundays in the gambling dens of Maçao\* and Kowloon, where the gambling craze is

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\* The Portuguese island Maçao can be reached from Hong Kong in 3 hours by steamship; the Kowloon peninsula across the harbor in 10 minutes.

presented in a considerably more garish light than in Monte Carlo's splendid gambling halls.

Where does the money come from? Nobody has any doubts about that. When one hears that the young Mr. Bobson or Senhor da Silva has been obliged to travel to Europe for their health, their fellow gamblers sympathetically shrug their shoulders – they understand.

But the next Sunday the young gentlemen still go to enjoy life with Austrian or American demimondes, drink champagne, and play *fantan* until their last cent and last object of value has gone into the pockets of the Portuguese or Chinese game room hosts.

But the hosts are compassionate. They know there will be scandal if the young man does not appear in the office on Monday morning. Therefore the dejected losers can always count on a five dollar bill for a return ticket to Hong Kong.

So, "never mind, better luck next time," but next time rarely arrives, and the head of the agency employing *Hr.* Goldstein or *Hr.* Pettersen of Teutonic or Scandinavian origin will soon suggest that they for the sake of their health follow Bobson and da Silva's example.

We may understand from this that the Chinese obsession with gambling is a very harmful ambience for young, rootless souls of the West, and such individuals are best off at home with their parents.

Even among the European seamen in China there is a decided tendency to engage in stock market speculation and other risky investments when they have been out there a while.

All kinds of sports are almost unknown in China. Of the four classes that the nation can be divided into, farmers, artists, merchants, and officials, the first three have little time to engage in outdoor recreational activities, and the officials consider themselves above such frivolities.

When they sometimes in the treaty ports witness the Europeans at play – tennis, cricket, football, etc. – they only shrug their shoulders with a patronizing smile.

To think of a most venerable bishop or a white-haired diplomat playing tennis together with a couple of young ladies!

No, not for gold and green forests would one of these high notables in the intellectual world put aside the elegant, dignified bearing that their great ideal Confucius valued so highly.

Besides, 4 – 6 centimeters long fingernails protected by a gold cover, is a rather bothersome handicap for all kinds of outdoor sports.

However, young students, who have not yet gotten onto the official ladder and the smart young merchants to be, have the time. One cannot study or calculate bottom lines all day and night, and the time must be put to use in some way or other.

Usually there are in every city one or more literary clubs where the students gather and discuss religious or philosophical subjects, read aloud their unpublished poems, or test each others' intelligence with versified riddles and charades.

However, these gatherings are not sufficient to completely fill the time, so the young gentlemen become bored and look for a more exciting way to pass the time and that is gambling.

Game playing is the unfortunate remedy for boredom in China. The Chinese have many varieties to choose from. I have already mention *fantan*, which resembles our game of dice. One of the most common is chess, which the Chinese insist they invented more than a thousand years before it became known in India.

The Chinese chessboard is divided into two sections with 32 squares in each. The general (the king) stands in the middle of the soldiers (farmers or pawns) with a *sze* or councilor on each side.

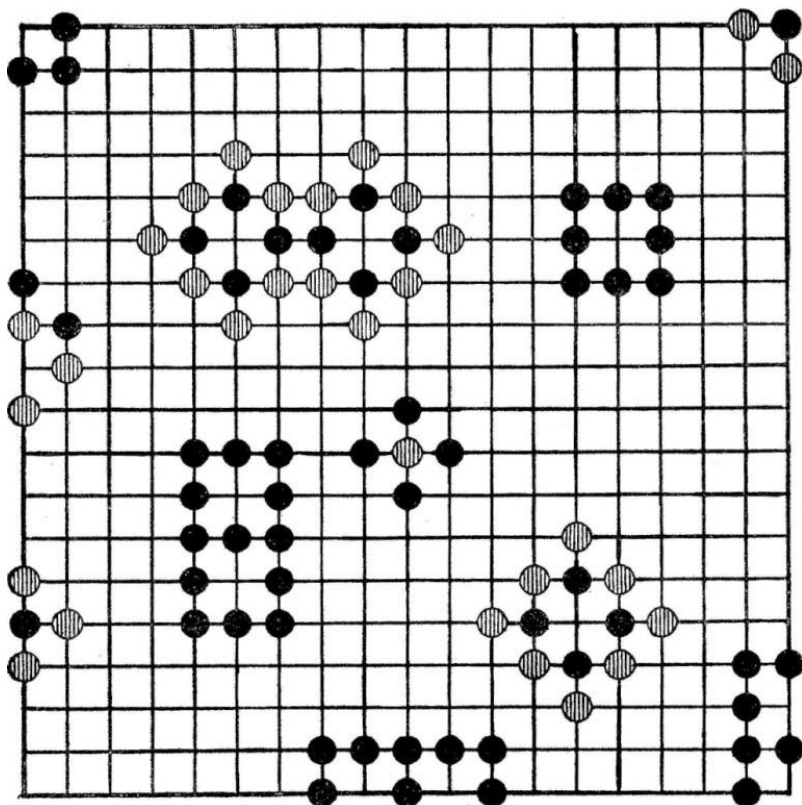
In the Persian version there is only one such, which is called *firz*, whose Latinized name became *fercia*. This word later went over to the French *vierge*, which presumably gave rise to the idea of a female councilor, which in our chess game is called the queen.

In the Chinese game two elephants are placed next to the councilors, thereafter on the same line two horses and two war chariots. A cannon is placed in front of the horses and with 2 empty spaces, the soldiers. The moves with the elephants, horses, and chariots are about the same as with our knights and castles.

Like our king, the general cannot be captured, and the game is won by the player who is first to check-mate his opponent's general.

There is an even better game that is called *wei-chi*, or the war game, but this is extremely difficult and is only known to a few.

I will not weary my readers with a description of this complicated game, which is a credit to its intelligent inventor, but only mention that it is played with 300 black and white counters on a board that looks like this:



*Wei-chi*, or the War Game.

The counters are not placed in the middle of the squares as in chess, but at the intersections of the lines. There are 361 such points and the object of the game is to surround as many of the opponent's counters as possible. *Wei-chi* is said to have been invented by Emperor Yao, who lived ca. 2,000 years B.C. But even if this is 1,000 years too far back in time, this game must still be considered a quite venerable way of whiling away the time.

Card games are also common. The cards are narrower and longer than ours and the number of cards in the deck is more than double.

Dominos, which is played quite like our game, has many fans, especially among the lower classes.

When the monthly pay was given out to the sailors on the warships, I always found the below decks fully occupied by game players, and the discipline – well, it would have to take a nap, otherwise it would be necessary to punish the whole crew.

At times, when we boarded suspicious merchant ships, it was not uncommon to find the whole crew playing dominos under the dim light of a dark lantern.

By taking a walk through the narrow streets of the cities, one gets a good insight into the extent to which the craze for game-playing has taken hold – even among the lower classes.

Even the children play with their allowance pennies at the cake stalls. These usually have a small roulette wheel with a spinning disc that the small customers try to make stop on a lucky number.

Perhaps the little player is lucky and gets three times as much for his money? Or perhaps the disc stops by an unlucky number? Whichever – the little boy or girl seems to take the outcome with crushing indifference, just like a habitual gambler in Monte Carlo.

Tired and hungry laborers sometimes prefer to gamble for their evening meal rather than buy it in the usual way.

On entering a restaurant, one finds on the counter a row of cups filled with sticks with a number inscribed on their bottom ends. The laborer pulls out one of the sticks and perhaps loses his rice cake and cup of tea for that evening. The next day he may be lucky and get a double portion. Who can predict the whims of fortune?

Beggars often play with each other for the copper coins they have just received from a compassionate soul.

I have even seen the prisoners in Shanghai throw dice in their cells for the miserable bits of food the guards provide for them. The gambling craze can hardly go lower than that.

It is usually only small sums that are involved, but there are also often articles in the newspapers about fortunes lost in a single night.

The Chinese government has of course had its attention called to this unfortunate side of the national character. Proclamations and prohibitions are issued *en masse*, but since the strict measures against gambling dens do not always win sympathy among the lesser officials, who sometimes receive clinking "presents" from the gambling interests, the government's efforts have so far been in vain.



## Chapter Six

### Fishing in East Asia.

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**T**he coasts of East Asia are among the world's richest fishing grounds. The Great Banks of Labrador and Newfoundland are still Norway's main rivals in the fish markets of southern Europe, but our exporters should not be surprised if they also get an East Asian competitor in the not too distant future. We know that Japanese cod liver oil already has made inroads on the London market.

Every river and lake in China teem with fishing boats and almost every stream, every pond is used for breeding fish.

There are as many varieties of fish as there are days in the year and they are prepared in the most diverse ways. A Chinese author thinks there are about 5,000 different kinds of fish dishes sold in the markets, and I wonder if there may not

be as many different ways to catch them, since I have seen different fishing tackle everywhere I have been.

The usual set-up along the riverbanks is a large net, which is held spread out with bamboo rods. The net is lowered and hoisted by means of an ingenious balanced boom apparatus with a minimum of physical exertion.

It is more entertaining to watch the tame otters and fishing birds when the owner lets them out into muddy river water. They dive under like an arrow and usually come up with a large fish in their jaws. So that the fishing bird – called *loutse* by the Chinese – will not swallow its catch, an iron ring is fastened around its throat, but the owner always gives his friend a small piece of fish as a reward; otherwise it sulks and loses all interest in diving for prey.

Another catch method is the so-called "water poisoning," which is done at the mouth of small rivers. A net is stretched across the river and one of the fishermen goes upstream a ways and casts a grey-colored powder out into the water. It is so fine-grained that it spreads out in infinitely many particles. The powder irritates the gills of the fish and those that may be present below the place where the poison is cast out take off in a rush, and since the net reaches all the way to the bottom, the fishermen usually make a good catch.

The disgusting method of fishing with explosive mines is also used, but only in open fjords or large rivers, where there is a lot of fish. Exploding mines in small mountain lakes or small ponds is a barbaric method of extermination that I have only heard of in Norway.



The fishing bird *loutse*.

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Fishing from the banks with lines is very common, but oddly enough, the Chinese fishermen do not use bait. Nor do the hooks have a barb, and this seems very astonishing to us who were raised in the belief that fish hooks must be provided with both. The Chinese seem to rely as much on the hooks catching in the sides of the passing fishes as on the hooks being swallowed.

The year around a lot of fish are caught along the coast trolling with smacks. These boats are some very peculiarly clumsy things with low bows and high sterns. The anchor is usually made of wood reinforced with iron. Instead of lowering the anchor from the bow, the Chinese let it fall from the high sternpost.

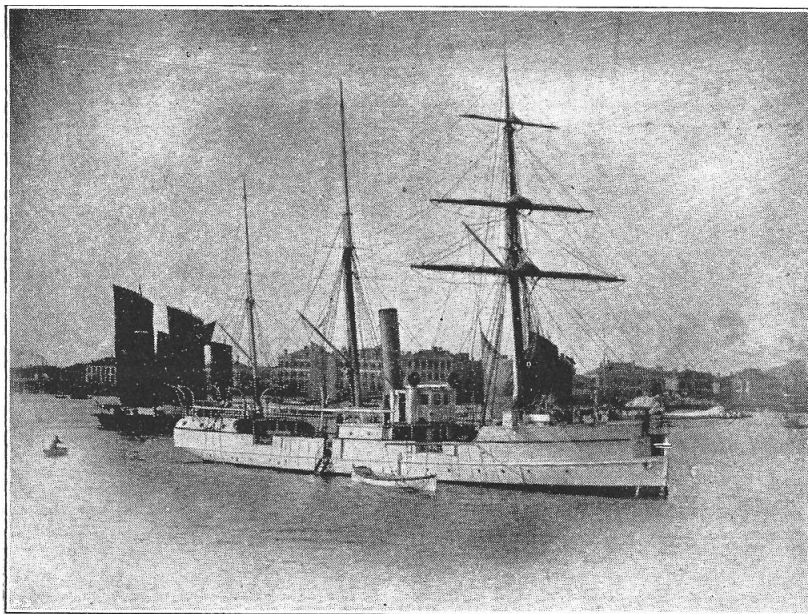
The sails on these smacks are typically very primitive – but very easy to manage. They are usually made from woven grass mats or cleft bamboo and look a lot like an extended fish fin. A large eye is always painted on each side of the broad bow, "so that the vessel can see to find its way in the dark."

The trolling smacks are seldom longer than 15 meters with a width of up to 6 meters, but such a *junk* can still be home to three or four families. The tall stern-castle serves as living quarters and therefore usually has two or three levels.

Even the youngest family members, eight to ten years old of both sexes, seem to be good sailors, and I have many times enjoyed watching the little ones run around the deck hauling on bowlines and sheets while setting sails.

Sometimes the unfettered free life that these fishermen lead the year around gives rise to a proclivity for small-scale smuggling and piracy.

During my service on the Chinese gunboat "*Ling-Fêng*," it often happened when patrolling with the steam sloop at night that we encountered some of these fishing smacks that engaged in suspicious maneuvers when they spied the patrol boat. They were then immediately chased down and boarded. I always found it advisable to have my revolver ready, since the fishermen's dark looks clearly told me that my crew's flashing sabers and my cocked revolver were necessary to imbue them with fear and maintain law and order on the waters.



The gunboat "*Ling-Fêng*"

For trolling, or rather, trawling, they always use two smacks. The nets are stretched from one vessel to the other. The length of the net is usually up to ca. 200 meters.

By means of an ingeniously designed system of winches and blocks and tackle the net is drawn up a couple of times a day. The fish is sorted and dropped into large tubs or water containers, since, like with us, it is a standing rule that fish should be sold alive.

The most interesting and elegant way to catch fish is with a torch and a board. I often witnessed this ingenious mode of fishing during my nightly expeditions along the coast. It is very simple. The fisherman attaches a burning torch to the gunwale of his small boat, which is anchored over a known fishing ground. A meter-wide board is laid over the gunwale on a slant such that a small piece of the board is below the water surface. The board is painted white and varnished works as a reflector for the torch. The size and position causes a lot of the light that otherwise would be lost to be cast through the water. As we know, fish are strongly attracted to light. They swim toward the light and often hit the slick board so hard that they glide upward and into the boat, while the fisherman sits there quietly smoking his pipe.

There are many other fishing methods to tell about, but it would probably only interest professional fishermen.

## Chapter Seven

### Child murder in China.

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**M**ost Europeans believe that killing newborn girl babies is common in China and that this is done with the government's approval.

To accuse a fourth of the world's population of being a society of child murderers is a very serious matter. If the allegation proves to be unsubstantiated, the Europeans who have visited China – and especially the missionaries who professes to love the people they are working among – will be deserving of very strong criticism.

I have read through several French and English magazines that from certain quarters are supplied with "sketches" of life in China – and I must admit that I often become a little depressed at the thought of how little a candle of truth can accomplish in Egyptian darkness.

The charge of infanticide is thrown into the face of the Chinese people without hesitation, without reservations, and sometimes is given a strong color of authority.

In today's world one cannot any longer publish fables and assertions that cannot be substantiated. Steam and electricity



has brought the distances between foreign countries down to a minimum, and it is very easy to control conscienceless sensation mongers that love to distort the truth.

The origin of the female infanticide theory dates from the end of the past century. The doubtful honor to a large extent belongs to the Englishman Mr. Barrow, whose unreliable depictions of Chinese conditions are widespread among Europeans. Often, the Chinese only laugh when his name is mentioned.

This gentleman, among other things, relates from his stay in Peking that the police employed a number of people, who drove around in the city early in the morning to collect all the baby corpses that the parents had thrown out into the street!

No questions asked; the babies were carted off to a deep hole outside the city walls and dumped into it – the living as well as the dead.

Barrow further relates that "the Catholic missionaries visited the holes every day in order to save some of the victims," and they had told him the most hair-raising stories from their experiences with these murder pits.

Dogs and pigs also were let loose in the streets of Peking early in the morning before the police made their rounds. And for what purpose? Of course, so that the animals could still their hunger on the flesh and blood of the babies!

Barrow calculates from the missionaries' assertions that almost 9,000 babies are killed annually in Peking alone.

Many credulous scribes giving us information about China have fallen for similar stories. They write about what they have *heard*, but not *seen*.

Barrow had plenty of time to verify the truth. He made several trips on horseback around in the vicinity of Peking, but we never hear that he *himself* has encountered any baby burying pits.

The missionary William Milne, one of the few – if not the only one among the apostles of the gospels to defend the Chinese nation, criticizes Mr. Barrow's statements as follows:

"I would not knowingly conceal aught of the cruelties and sufferings of the Chinese; but, until I have better evidence than Barrow's, and as his bold assertions are entirely opposed to my personal investigations on the point, I have no hesitation in giving a flat denial to any assertion like his, intended to impress the European public with the notion that infanticide is practised among the Chinese with a shocking kind of system. Indeed, it is a question that gives room for inquiry whether this crime is proportionably greater in China than in some countries nearer home.

From what I have seen, in their families, of their parental affection, love of their offspring, and care of their female children, I assert it to be a foul slander on the Chinese people, to perpetuate in our publications stories that impress the youthful mind especially with the idea that they are so unnatural, wanting in feeling, and given to the slaughter of infants, that hungry hogs and dogs are trained to watch the dawn of morn, as the hour for being let loose into the streets to cram their stomachs with shreds of outcast babes, and that dead-carts follow in their wake to scrape together the mangled remains of the poor unfortunates."

Dr. Milne wrote these words after he had served at several mission stations around China for 15 years and had traveled through the provinces of Chekiang, Kiangsi, and Kwantung lengthwise and crosswise, and it is especially these regions that have been accused of infanticide on a large scale.

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A while after my arrival in China, a discussion began in *The North China Daily News* about this matter, and it was this that caused me to investigate the pro and contras carefully. The first article was written by a European who had lived in Ningpo for many years.

A female apostle from that treaty port had written an article in a large Sunday school magazine and stated that "here in Ningpo, like in other places in China, there are some conical brick structures where poor folk and others who wanted to get rid of their newborn girl babies could dump them down into."

The lady probably intended to show her compassionate friends how pressing the Chinese people's spiritual needs were.

However, the old Ningpo resident unfortunately received a copy of the magazine and reported in the Shanghai paper "that the baby tower in Ningpo was built for a charitable purpose, so that the poor should not have to pay for the funerals of their *stillborn* babies, and this probably also was the purpose of the other towers of similar appearance that one often sees near the city walls."

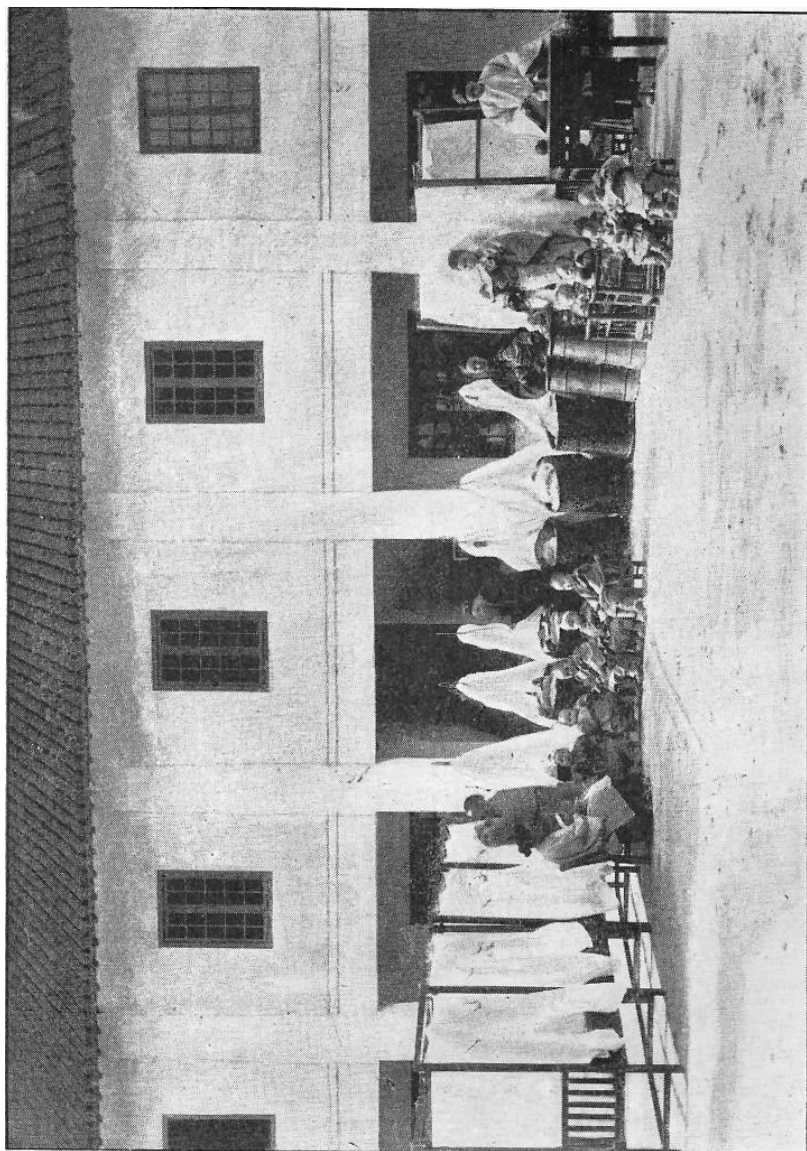
It is not only the missionaries that spread the dreadful charge of child murder. I have often heard it from other Europeans – old people, who are equally well acquainted with Chinese conditions today as they were twenty, thirty years ago when they first set foot on the soil of their adopted homeland.

I do not understand the thought processes of such people. Many pride themselves on not having learned a Chinese word though a number of them draw large salaries from the same Chinese that they look down on with such dull-witted contempt born of ignorance. Very logical.

It is no wonder that "globe-trotters" learn so many curious things about China when they begin to "pump" such individuals.

However, the question remains: Does infanticide occur in China? The answer must be: Yes, but in about the same proportion as in European countries. Orphanages have existed since time immemorial, and Chinese mothers do not under normal conditions burden their conscience with child murder. Certainly, an old English newspaper informs us that "there is no way out of the Chinese orphanages." This information the editor should have kept to himself. Anyone who has visited such an institution knows how strict the controls are.

In Shanghai there is an orphanage that was founded in 1710. I have visited it myself, but prefer to let the missionary Dr; Milne have the floor. It may perhaps be more palatable for friends of the mission to hear the description of one of these innumerable institutions from one their own emissaries:



The orphanage.

"It stands in the south-east part, and near the centre of the city, in a retired lane; where over an unpretending gateway there is the inscription on stone, Yuhyingtang - 'The Hall for Nourishing Infants.' The first thing that attracts your attention is a drawer at the right side of the entrance. Curiosity led me to pull it out, and I found it nicely wadded with cotton. On shutting it, I heard a bell tinkle inside the building; and it was explained to me that this drawer was meant for the deposit of any babe brought there by day or night. That due notice may be given to the inmates, the drawer, as soon as it slides back, touches a spring that pulls a bell; and then the porter hastens to open it and introduce the live contents to the resident director.

Upon entering the building, I counted twenty-four indoor foundlings, chiefly infant girls, and among them maimed, blind, and idiots. To one child in particular my attention was called - a deaf mute eleven years of age. Of outdoor patients they had at that time 100 on their books. The nursery apartments were small, with cots humble, but sufficiently comfortable for the nurses. Some low empty barrels were pointed out, which, I was told, were used for lodging the little creatures, to relieve the nurses' arms when their charges became too heavy, or began to creep about. These child-barrels are about the ordinary height of a crawling infant, and full of straw, into which the piccaninny is put, and kept erect and out of harm's way. Of hired wet-nurses I saw several, some of them in charge of two or three babes; and all were young, and appeared more healthy, clean, and good-looking than women generally of the lower orders. I was introduced to two resident officers, one a medico in his surgery, rather respectable in appearance and bearing. They informed me that, as the children grow up, they are adopted into families, or betrothed, or sent out to service. But no more

accurate description can be given of the establishment, its objects and working, than in its annual reports, of which I have two specimens, one (for the year 1849) presented me on my last visit.

Perhaps the most curious and instructive part of that report is the rules of the institution. A list of fourteen of these is given, which are too long and minute for more than a brief summary of the more important. These provide that the friends of the society shall meet every fortnight in the building, when, after paying their respects to the patron idol, they shall inspect the children, inquire into the conduct of the nurses, and give them their allowances in money and food. Under another head, the examination to be given to each foundling on entering is detailed in the following terms:- 'The officers of the establishment must try to find out the year, month, and day of the child's birth; the lines and form of the fingers must be inspected;\* likewise whether all the senses and members be perfect, and if there be on the body any scars or sores: all these particulars must be registered, and the child may then be given to one of the nurses to suckle.'

Special attention is called to the hiring of wet nurses, on which subject a whole paragraph is bestowed. 'Nothing can be so important in the rearing of infants as to select suitable wet nurses. This ought always to be attended to with caution. Should any woman wish to obtain such a situation in our establishment, her own husband may come and give in her name, or a relative may

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\* The object of this is to prevent or detect any kind of smuggling or exchanging children belonging to the institution. Thus prisoners and exiles have generally the wrinkles and lines upon their hands carefully examined and registered, to prevent evasion, etc.

do so, or a neighbour; but they must likewise stand security for her. The resident officers must then see that she is really able to suckle. If she be approved, of, let her full name be entered on the lists; and when the foundlings are brought in, let them be distributed amongst these wet-nurses, as need be. Let there be constant vigilance to ascertain whether these women prove neglectful of their charge, or pass the children over to other hands, or exchange the children amongst themselves, so as to avoid trouble, or, what is worse than all, whether they have sent their own children into the building, and then offered themselves as nurses, for the sake of gain It is the duty of the officers of the establishment to make all these inquiries. Should any of the nurses be charged with light offences, dismiss them at once, and appoint others in their stead; but for more serious offences, let them be handed over to the justice of the law.'

The eleventh rule requires due clothing to be provided for the children, and prescribes that 'in the third month there shall be given each foundling a calico shirt and a pair of trousers; in the fourth, a breast bib and mosquito curtains; and in the eighth, a cotton jacket and petticoat, a cap, stockings, and a wadded coverlet. All these articles must have the mark of the establishment stamped on them, and whenever they are given out, must be registered in the books. The nurses are forbidden to pawn them. Each year, exactly as each season expires, the clothes must be duly changed, and should any child die or be adopted, they must be restored to the establishment.' Again:- 'An infant that has been deserted, has been deprived of the regard of both father and mother; but our institution engages to receive and train it up. Now, after that child has by adoption been transferred by us into other hands, if any one should falsely assume to be its father or mother, and by force carry it off, the



only appeal against such savage villainy is just to lay the written engagements between the board and the adopting family before the magistrate, and hand the offenders over to justice.' Moreover, 'our asylum provides only for taking charge of deserted infants; so, should any persons recommend their own child to be suckled by the nurses of this house, on the plea that the mother is sick or dead, or bring any child of three years old and upwards that can feed itself and walk - no such case can for a moment be entertained, and we shall appeal to the magistrate for support.'

Finally, 'as to the adoption by families of foundlings from our establishment - the male children must be adopted according to all the rules and rites of legitimacy, as if the adopting parents were childless; then there need be no more trouble about them. But about the girls, to prevent their being taken away merely to be reared for concubinage, or made objects of purchase, or reserved for other vile purposes, the superintendent of the institution, unless he be already thoroughly acquainted with the contracting parties, must first of all inquire about the occupations of the said persons, so that he may be quite certain that the child is not to be doomed to debasement of any kind. But even then, previous to any formal transfer of the girl, let due securities be taken from the relatives and neighbours of the parties. This being a point of first-rate importance, let the utmost caution be exercised in it.'

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I would like to know if Europeans would find it fair if a Chinese, who got hold of some European newspapers, was to accuse us of being a society of child murderers because he accidentally came across some "angel-making stories" or just a few isolated instances?

The accusation against the Chinese is equally unfair and abhorrent. Some authorities also claim that "the government approves of this custom." The parents in China certainly have great powers over their children, but a little knowledge of chapter 319 of the *Penal Code of China*\* would inform these "authorities" how infanticide is regarded. It states:

"If a father, mother, paternal grandfather or grandmother, chastises a disobedient child or grandchild in a severe and uncustomary manner, so that he or she dies, the party so offending shall be punished with 100 blows. – When any of the aforesaid relations are guilty of killing such disobedient child or grandchild designedly, the punishment shall be extended to 60 blows and one year's banishment."

Staunton, whose knowledge of China and the Chinese no Orientalist will dispute, adds the following footnote:

"However prevalent infanticide may be supposed to be in China, we see from the above paragraph that the crime does not go unnoticed. Both public opinion and the laws of the empire condemn child murder."

In China's long history there have of course been periods when parents, driven to insanity by want and misery, have killed their children or set them out by the road in the hope that a good Samaritan would pass by. This has happened in European countries also. The emperor and other authorities have then issued proclamations and decrees, which in the most severe terms have reminded the starving and destitute people of their obligations as parents. It is mostly on the basis of these printed exhortations that people who stand to gain from such things cast such a terrible accusation against a nation whose greatest fortune is – its children.

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\* Sir George Staunton's translation.

## Chapter Eight

### Opium.

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**I**t is a widespread opinion in Europe that all Chinese smoke opium and that the poison sooner or later will bring the whole nation to the edge of the abyss.

This belief is steadily reinforced by hair raising descriptions from "globe trotters" visits to "opium dens," these hell-holes on earth, where the vice is seen in all its horrors, these foci of misery, where the ruined man of the world meets in fraternal union with the beggar, the thief, and the gambler to gain a little glimmer of light into his joyless existence.

From such places the whole nation is then judged. It is like condemning a European nation because of a gang of gamblers and drunkards after a visit to Monte Carlo or White-

chapel. Well, these gentlemen may partially be excused. Their stay in the country is too short, perhaps only a few days, and they wish to see as much as possible, but they ought not to add misleading commentaries on the whole nation to their descriptions.

However, the subject of this chapter was supposed to be the opium trade. How are the Chinese doing after they got a taste for the opium poison?

A missionary gives us the following information in *London and China Express*: "The fact is that this evil is completely beyond the politicians' control, even beyond the philanthropists'. Nothing but the divine power of the Christian religion will be able to defeat the evil. Only the Christian missionaries can stop the opium scourge now that it has assumed such colossal dimensions, and the despised missionaries are now solving a problem that no statesman has solved. Therefore those who acknowledge the destructive effects of opium smoking can best help eliminate the pest by giving their mite to the Protestant mission in China."

Following this introduction, I will permit myself to state my own opinion of the opium question.

First, I will give a short overview of the history of the opium plant.

It is a very common belief that it was English traders who first brought opium to China, but this is not quite correct. The plant was known in the Celestial Empire long before the English showed up in Asian waters.

The travels of the Portuguese explorer Barbosa in the Indian Ocean gives us a good picture of Asian commerce at

the time when Vasco da Gama passed the Cape of Good Hope and found the way to India.

The Portuguese came as a new trading nation, eager to take over the trading monopoly the Arabs and the Chinese had possessed for centuries.

While Barbosa sailed eastward from port to port, he wrote a very detailed description of their imports and exports. Opium already was very sought after product, but was only used as medicine. Barbosa states that at that time opium from Aden brought higher prices than that from Cambay, near the present Bombay on India's west coast.

Aden at that time was the main export port for Asia Minor, and by closer examination we find that Asia Minor must be the place of origin for the opium plant as well as humankind.

At least Asia Minor was the only known place where opium was being cultivated when Hippocrates founded the first Greek school of medicine and Celsus and Scribonius Largus wrote about *Materia Medica*.

The Arabs carried opium farther and farther east.

Thus Barbosa relates that on his arrival in Malacca he saw Javanese sailors intoxicated from opium.

When the famous traveler spoke of the Chinese, he mentioned their taste for opium, which the merchants called *anfiang*. This is the Arabic and Persian word for opium, presumably derived from the Greek *opion*, and this word was Latinized to opium and became the general term in Europe when the trade was taken over by the Portuguese. The trade expanded greatly after the English became entrenched in

India, and the East-India Company soon drove the trade up to such a height that the Chinese government decided it ought to put a stop all further importation of the medicine, whose effects became more and more noticeable.

When the East-India Company refused to obey the ban, the conflict between the European traders and the Chinese authorities became serious.

Finally, an imperial commissioner, Lin Tso-hsü, was sent from Peking to ensure that the empire's laws would be respected.

He opened negotiations with Captain Elliot, who then was the English trade commissioner in Canton. The result was that Captain Elliot promised that *all the opium that was found on English ships in Canton's harbor should be handed over to the Chinese authorities, and what was more – Elliot got his countrymen to give their word of honor they would not engage in the opium trade any more.*

According to this agreement, 20,283 chests were confiscated and burned. This gave occasion for the First Opium War, a violation of all international law. China was forced to pay ca. 20 million dollars in "reparations," open 4 ports to the opium trade, and relinquish the island of Hong Kong. But that was the least part of the damage.

The war broke down the respect the people in South China had for the government, and the unrest shortly afterward resulted in the Taiping Rebellion – one of the most devastating civil wars in China's history. Four years before it ended, another quarrel about the importation of opium arose, and the peace treaty opened 14 ports for the poison, which

was to be forced onto the Chinese people with the cannon of western civilization.

But fortunately the experience of the English has not answered to their expectations. Since 1860 the imports of Indian opium has gone down rather than up, and if Sir John Peake and the other anti-opium members of the British Parliament will wait 5 – 6 years, they can save themselves the effort. The Indian opium import trade will have ended by itself within that time. However, we should honor these men, who have raised their voices against this traffic, which mildly stated is not appropriate for the great English nation.

The decline in imports does not come from reduced consumption, but results from the practical Chinese having begun to cultivate the opium plant themselves, and this industry has developed with such a rush that the imported opium at the moment just accounts for 1/5 of the total consumption.

The government has issued edicts *en masse*, since it fears that the cultivation of opium will lead to higher consumption, but it has been fruitless. The public opinion is too strong, and the authorities must, as customary in China, give way for the will of the people.

The cultivation of opium has become an important source of income for Chinese farmers, and they will not give it up. Besides, tending to the crop can be accomplished by women and children, who otherwise would not be able to help with the hard work in the fields.

The consumption of opium at this time amounts to 20 million kilograms annually, i.e., 50 grams per individual and

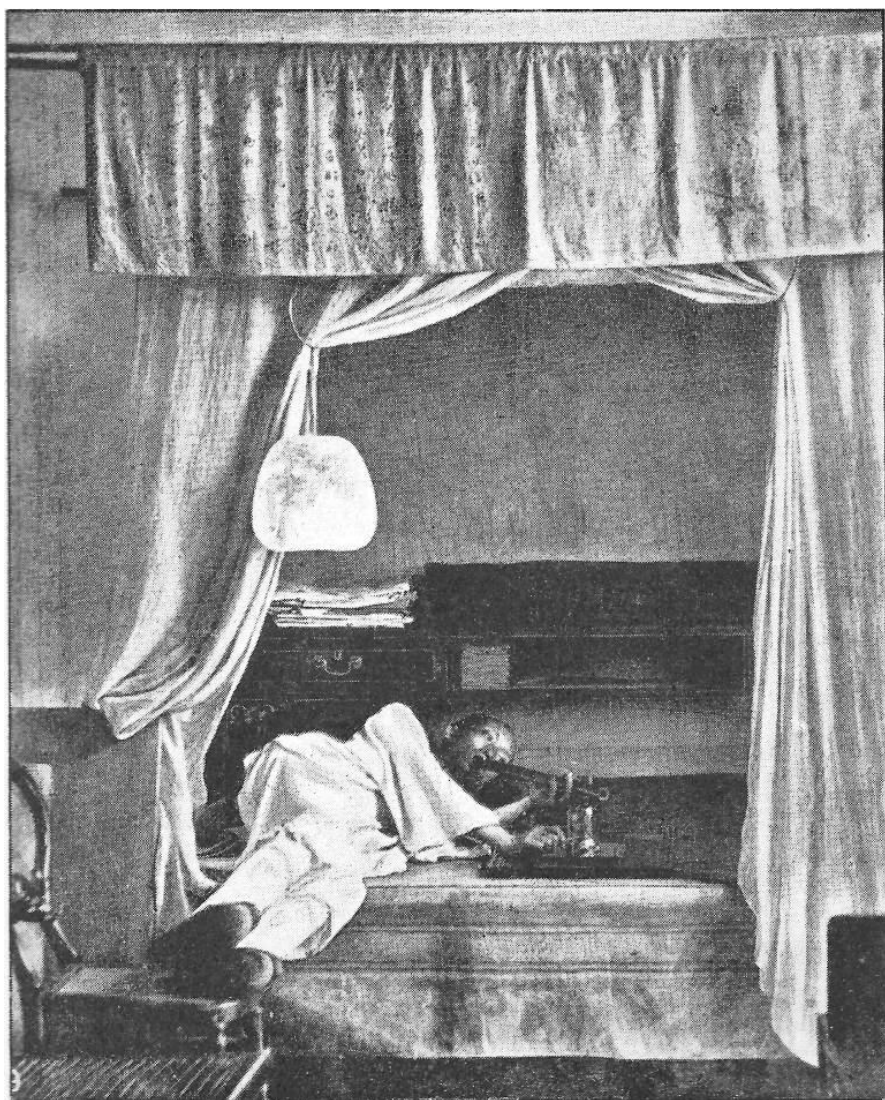
worth ca. 35 cents, or, if we assume one out of ten Chinese smokes, ½ kilogram and \$3.50.

I admit that this money could have been used for better purposes, but in some cases opium is a necessary stimulant for people who are obliged to perform unusually heavy work, such as the poor creatures who day in and day out haul large *junks* up the rivers. Their only restorative is a pipe of opium. However, no one should think that these men can afford the pure article. No, closer investigation reveals that the "opium" consists of bean flour mixed with 5 to 10 percent of the costly stuff. That this mixture is cheaper and less harmful than liquor and tobacco is self evident.

On the whole it is obvious that the masses of China's workers do not have opportunity to smoke opium regularly, and if we compare opium smoking with the effects of alcoholic beverages in Europe, it becomes apparent that while opium ruins hundreds, the victims of the devil drink can be counted in thousands. At the same time Chinese cities are free of the revolting scenes of drunkenness even though the Chinese liquor *Samshu* is cheaper than any liquor elsewhere.

Excessive use of alcohol has an effect on the coming generations. On the other hand the unborn will not suffer from one's excessive use of opium, since an opium smoker will seldom if ever have children, and it is this factor that prevents excessive opium smoking from becoming a general problem. The Chinese consider children to be their greatest blessing here on earth. A man with a flock of children is considered especially favored by Fortune.





An opium smoker.

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Weaker races, such as the Indians in America and the Malays in the Indian Archipelago, succumb due to excessive use of firewater and opium. But with regard to the nation that already stood on a high level of civilization when our ancestors still were running around in the forests, it is a fact that we who have studied the conditions up close still are not able to admit that smoking opium at this time causes only a fraction of the damage that alcohol does in the West. How many thousands of homes are not every year turned into hells on earth by drink? How many brilliant minds are not lost even in our little society due to the fateful poison of alcohol? And still, no one accuses us of being a nation of drunkards. *A moderate use of opium has no more damaging effects than a moderate use of alcohol and tobacco.*

After all is said, it is a fact that opium, which was forced onto the Chinese nation with Western cannon, is a stimulant that healthy people in no way need and that the nation would be better off without, but this notion of a national evil that can only be eradicated by liberal contributions to the mission funds makes little sense. At the same time, I will state that I have great sympathy for the mission doctors who try as best they can to alleviate the damage done by excessive smoking of opium. This benevolence carried out in practice is something anyone can understand, but I do not see the necessity for depicting a whole nation as a gang of opium smokers just to get Europeans and Americans to open their purse for a noble cause.

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## Chapter Nine

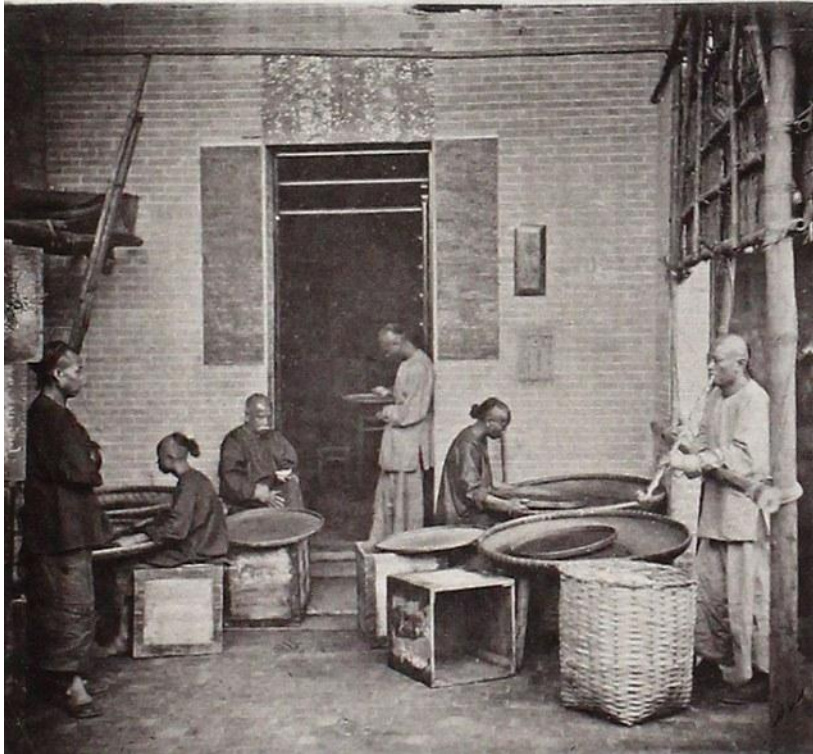
### The Chinese national drink.

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**T**he Chinese national drink is *wan sha* – a cup of tea. Tea cultivation has been described as far back as 2000 B.C. in China's history, but according to legend Emperor Ching Kung, who lived ca. 1,000 years before that, was the first to discover the virtues of the plant. He happened to hang a branch of a tea bush above a kettle of boiling water. Several of the leaves fell down into the kettle – and a few years later tea was known far and wide around.

Since ancient times, the Chinese have sent presents of tea to their vassals and admirers. The emperors of India and Japan seem to have been among the most favored.

A gift that was once sent to the Sultan of Ceylon was described as follows: "The tea weighed 20 kg., and each leaf was of the perfect size, color, and age. The leaves were divided into packets of about 100 gram each and encased in silver packaging, which again were wrapped with thin, white paper and placed in colored silk bags. These were then placed in a porcelain vase whose lid was closed and sealed. Then the vase was set down into a camphor chest furnished with silver hinges and finely worked inlays."



Sorting tea leaves.

These presents of tea have preserved the names of many rulers, whose identities otherwise would have been lost to history. The officials in charge of making up and delivering the presents made notes regarding the recipients that give historians many interesting tidbits of information. They tell us that countries such as Korea, Manipur, Assam, and Tongking once were flourishing states; that Cambodia and Cochin-China had large, civilized populations that in many ways could keep up with their Chinese masters. Further, the researcher will find that Ceylon was ruled for centuries by brave, intelligent princes, who regularly followed one after the other like ocean waves, and from the north Genghis Khan and Tamerlane's ancestors sent tribute to their Chinese overlords, who in return sent the uncivilized sons of the Mongolian steppes gifts of tea with which to flavor their cold Siberian water.

By the time of Confucius, tea had quite displaced all other beverages. Its universal use is illustrated by his directive to his disciples: "Be kind and courteous to all, even to people from foreign lands. If someone is thirsty, give them a cup of tea without requiring payment."

One of the great master's contemporaries wrote of the national drink as follows; "It is better than wine, since it is not intoxicating. Nor does it cause people to do stupid things that are regretted when sober again. Tea is better than water, since it does not carry diseases with it, which water often does when putrefied substances poison the wells."

The nation has taken the words of these wise men to heart. If you visit a Chinese home – be it but a lowly hut – the

mistress of the house will greet you with: "*Ching hsien sheng wan sha*." ("If you please, Sir, a cup of tea?") One would think that a "civilized" European would always respond by receiving the offered cup with thanks, but regrettably I have often witnessed the contrary, and the dwelling's residents have had their notion of the Western barbarians reinforced.

It is not only to visitors that the Chinese show their hospitality. Outside all inns and larger merchant houses there is a large jar with tea water and cups alongside such that "all who are thirsty can have a cup without payment."

There was a lively tea trade with foreign countries long before the Birth of Christ. There are historical accounts of Chinese vessels, equipped with the "north and south needle\*," bringing cargoes of tea to Japan, Tongking, Siam, India, Ceylon, Persia, and the "fortunate" Arabia. The ships sailed from here west to a flat river country that was only separated from Arabia by a shallow sea, and this must, of course, have been Egypt. These reports have been confirmed in our time by finds of Chinese porcelain in Egyptian funeral chambers. Caravans carried tea along the trade routes of the Asian mainland.

China had a monopoly in the tea trade right up to 1838, but then tea plants were brought to India and planted there. The rise of this dangerous competition can best be shown with numbers. In 1839 the first harvest – 250 kg. – was exported to England, and in 1894 the volume had reached ca. 75 million kg., or about half as much as the total volume exported from all of China.

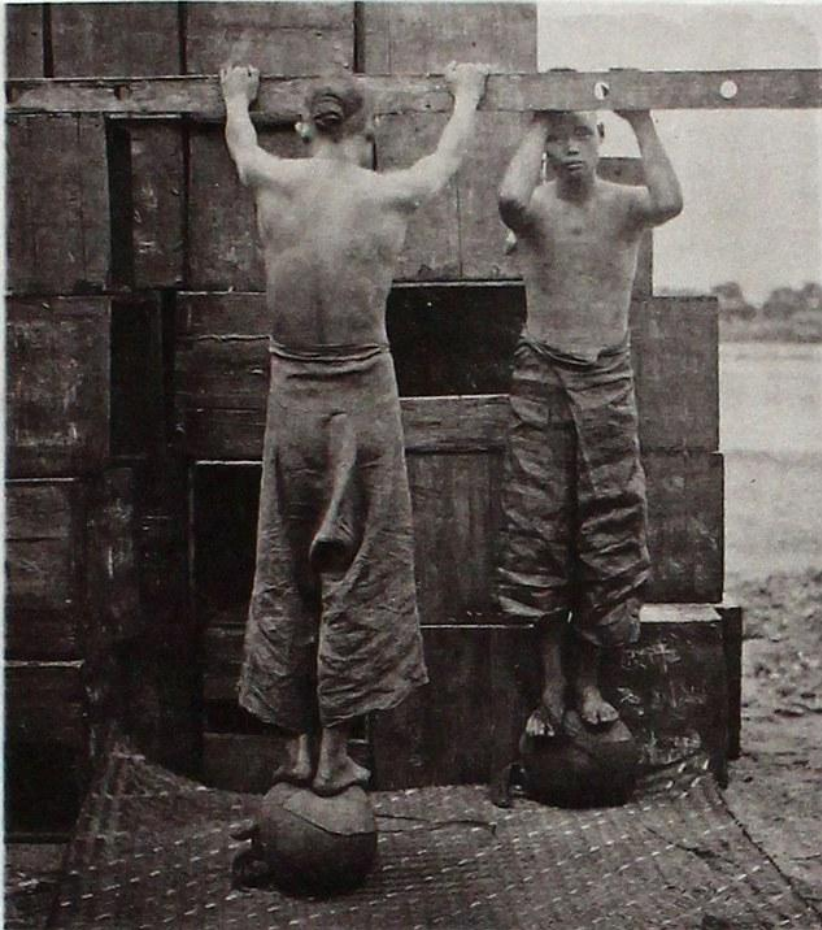
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\* The magnetic needle was first mentioned in China's history in 1122 B.C.



The Japanese have also planted tea bushes to an astonishing extent in recent times, and it looks like Japan and India together may soon become dominant in the tea market, since China's tea exports have not increased at all since 1880. The primary reason for this state of things is that the Indians and the Japanese produce tea both more economically and with better care than the Chinese. In addition, the Chinese export duty is too high. The Japanese pay only one fourth as much and the Indians nothing at all. Until these faults are corrected, the Chinese will day by day see themselves more and more shut out of the tea export market. The end will be like in the fable about the man who owned a goose that laid gold eggs. The Chinese tea certainly is the best, but in the long run the average person will prefer the Indian or Japanese teas, when these can be had for  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the price.

Tea is usually grown on higher terrain and thrives best in sandy soils. It resembles myrtle in appearance, has serrated, dark green, leathery leaves, and when fully grown is nearly 2 meters high. Growing tea is not labor intensive; the plant requires neither tending nor watering. When the bush is 3 to 4 years old, the first leaves are plucked in early April. This provides the finest kind of tea. There is a second harvest in June, and sometimes there can be a third harvest where the soil is more than usually favorable for the plant. Each bush occupies ca. 2 square meters and produces on average 2 to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  kg. green leaves annually, or ca.  $\frac{1}{2}$  kg. dried tea @ ca  $12\frac{1}{2}$  cents. The weather has a large influence on the quality. Too much rain turns the leaves yellow, and too much sun slows the growth.



Pressing the tannin out of tea leaves.

When the harvest is collected, the tea is dried in the sun on woven bamboo mats and gently rolled around until red spots appear on the leaves. They are then placed in cotton bags, which usually are placed in wooden boxes with many holes. A man then steps with his full weight on the bags, and a green, bitter fluid called tannin runs out of the holes.

After this the tea must be fermented, and this is done by placing it in baskets, which are covered to keep the warmth in. When 3 – 4 hours have passed, this is the last process from the grower's side. Then the agents for the large Chinese and European tea firms come and buy up the whole harvest, which is then sorted and prepared for exportation.



A European agent notes the weight of the tea chests.

All the larger European companies usually send a so-called tea taster to the market towns. Thousands of dollars stand at risk if this gentleman's taste buds are not in order. He must neither smoke nor drink spirits. But this abstinence pays off well and the working season is only 3 – 4 months a year. Some of the best known tea tasters make up to 3,000 dollars per working month.

Finally we will cast a quick glance into one of China's innumerable tea houses, which take the place of the European dram shops. No raucous, brutal, raving animals in here, even though the customers are of the working class. There are none of the disgusting scenes that sometimes occur in Portuguese or English taverns. Civilization's "firewater" has not yet got a foothold in the vigorous Chinese nation. The West can keep this blessing for itself, this plague, which poisons millions of happy homes.

We seat ourselves at one of the round wooden tables on the first or second floor of the tea house. On the walls hang colored and gilded pictures with passages from Confucius or some other Chinese sages' works – an alternate for the liquor distillers' advertisements. Some workers enjoying a cup of tea and some dried fruits after the day's work are seated around the tables. At the end of the room is the kitchen with some enormous pots over the fire. The waiters come with empty cups. A pinch of tea is thrown in; the cook pours hot water over it, and the tea is ready. The guests drink the boiling hot tea at once – not as in Europe a quarter hour later. Thus the

bitter taste that often marks the "strong" tea made by European housewives is avoided.

The tea house is almost the only place of entertainment for the working classes. The owner therefore often engages comedians, story- or fable tellers in order to attract a full house. Enjoying an evening at a Chinese restaurant will not break anyone's budget. A couple of cakes, a little jam, fruit, and a couple of cups of tea will at most set you back 10 cents; you are not hung over the next morning, and there is no trembling wife fearfully awaiting the tea drinker's homecoming.

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## Chapter Ten

### A little about betrothals.

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**T**oday marriage is more common among the Chinese than in any other civilized nation. The nation's lawgivers have always encouraged early marriage, and there are few men over twenty years of age who have not found themselves a wife.

The Chinese think, and certainly rightfully so, that a man who has a family to care for will show more industry and dependability in the carrying out of his duties as a citizen than bachelors.

But the primary incentive for marriage is ancestor worship. Like the ancient Greeks, the Chinese believe that the spirits of the unburied wander restlessly about without ever reaching the sacred abode of the dead.

Therefore the Chinese consider dying without a son who can perform their funeral ceremonies to be the greatest misfortune that can happen to them and try to ensure themselves against it by entering into matrimony as soon as possible.

Like all others in China, this institution is very old.

The young males of most races presumably had to acquire their brides with might and list in the early times of the people's existence, and that also seems to have been the case in China. The Chinese sign that stands for marriage consists of three parts that separately mean ear, man, and woman, which presumably refers to a custom that still is followed by Chinese soldiers – they lead their captives by their ears.

Among the least civilized Mongolian tribes, it is still the custom that the bridegroom shall pursue his bride through the several partitions of her father's tent while the female members of the family try to obstruct him in his efforts.

Among the Kalmucks and the Kirghizians, the groom must dare a horse race with his heart's desire, and it is said to often happen that the bride in this way can be rid of a man she does not favor.

Among us Europeans, the idea that the groom must receive his bride from the hand of his "best man," is presumably a tradition from the old days, when the maiden was taken by force and the bridesmaids are a symbol of her defendants.

The ceremonies now in use at weddings are at least 4,000 years old and we, who stand outside the battle, can easily understand how fruitless the missionaries' fanatical attacks on ancestor worship are, when we know how the Chinese people

cling to ancient customs – and understand the power of old traditions.

A bachelor who is not allowed to present his chosen one before his ancestors' memorial tablets – an innocent and charming custom – will immediately turn his back to the Christian teachers with contempt.

As in the West, betrothal is the first act in the comedy or tragedy of matrimony. It often happens that two families enter into a marriage contract before the children are born – of course, contingent on their being of different sexes – and such contracts are considered so binding that they are rarely broken by the children.

In the upper circles of society, it is very difficult for boys and girls to get to know each other, since any *paterfamilias* who can afford it, has the female members of the family live separated from the outer world as much as possible. Daughters are taught to appear cold and reserved even when visiting relatives and, of course, whenever the ladies take a trip to town, they are enclosed in sedan chairs.

Naturally, the curiosity of the daughters of Eve is not quite extinguished, and it is nourished to excess by a number of attendants, hairdressers, and "wise women" that are always found in wealthy Chinese homes.

Nor is it unheard of that boys and girls who are destined for each other find opportunity to evade their parents' eagle eyes to form loving relationships that later are tightened by the sacred bonds of marriage. The Chinese romantic literature is full of such situations.



As in the West, love matches are most common among the lower classes, where the young people's financial situation plays a lesser role. For economic reasons the sexes cannot be kept as sharply separated among the less well off families, and the social atmosphere is only regulated by the members' own sense of what is appropriate.

In all cases – whether it is a love match or an ordinary marriage of convenience that is to be arranged – a *mei-jin*, a middleman, or more often, a "middle woman," is employed.

This person is usually known for having a trustworthy character, sound judgment, and to be well informed about the financial condition and reputation of both families.

But before any action is undertaken in the matter, it is very common among the middle class to examine the young peoples' horoscope by comparing the year, month, date, and hour of their respective births to see if there should be any "unlucky" numbers among these data. This is why a betrothal is called *chu-pa-tse*, which means that "both have passed safely by the eight numbers."

When everything is in order, the matchmaker goes to the girl's parents and initiates the negotiations. If her father finds the suitor acceptable, the young man sends his intended several gifts as a sign that his proposal is seriously meant, and both their parents exchange formal letters regarding their children's union.

At the same time, the young man prepares a couple of red visiting cards upon which he has written the engagement contract with his most elegant calligraphy, attached a picture of a dragon to one and of a phoenix to the other, and

decorated both with strips of red silk cloth.. The origin of this custom according to an old legend is as follows:

Once upon a time there was a young man from Ting-lai, who met a grey-haired old man outside the city walls on a moonlit evening. The old man walked back and forth while reading in a large book, and when the young man respectfully greeted him and asked what was in the book, he replied: "It is a registry of all the marriages on Earth, and in my pocket I have red silk bands that I tie around the feet of those who are to become man and wife. When the band is tied, no power in Heaven or on Earth can change their fate. Your future wife is the daughter of the old woman who sells vegetables in the square."

When the young man heard this he ran to the woman's shop and saw an appallingly ugly ten year old girl playing with a kitten behind the counter. In his desperation he hired a hooligan to kill the little changeling so that the old man's prediction would not come to pass.

Several years later the young man became a judge in one of the largest cities in the province.

His highest superior, the *taotai*, had an unusually beautiful girl in his house, whom he presented as his daughter, and since the judge often came to the *taotai's* house on official business, he occasionally caught a glimpse of her loveliness and became so enamored that he proposed and was accepted. On the day of the wedding the groom noticed that his bride wore an artificial flower in her hair, which hung down across her forehead and over her left eyebrow.

He asked her what the reason was for this peculiar adornment and she would not immediately answer, but when he insisted she said:

"I am the daughter of my stepfather's brother who lived in the city of Ting-lai. When my mother died young and my father could not afford to marry again, I was set in foster care with a woman who sold vegetables. One day as I was sitting on my foster mother's lap, a brute came by and hit me above the eye with a sharp rock. The scar is still there and therefore I wear a flower to hide it."

Then the judge remembered the old man's prophesy and he embraced his young, beautiful wife and told her about the encounter by the riverbank.

And since that time it has been customary to attach red silk bands to the engagement notices.

\*

Chinese mothers also tell their daughters another legend – or rather a fairytale – which also points to belief in the predestination of marriage.

In this fairytale the stork acts as intermediary between Heaven and Earth.

There once was a district magistrate who was known far and wide for his fairness and diligence. His reputation reached the emperor's ear, and the man was appointed the superior judge in the province, but then he already was near death from overwork. Soon the righteous man flew up into the blue Heaven, and his friends paid for his funeral.

The judge left a highly gifted son who had to study on his own, since the family was too poor to afford a tutor.

One day as the student sat absorbed in his books, he heard a slight noise outside his window, and when he looked out, he saw a stork that had just flown down and settled on the ground. The bird's snow-white wings appeared so remarkable to him that he left his room and went out to the stork. To his great astonishment it was quite tame and let him stroke its feathers.

While he thus stood there caressing the bird, it artfully moved in under him and flew up into the air with its heavy burden. The student cried out in fear, but the stork did not take notice; it flew higher and higher up into the sky until clouds enveloped them both.

They finally came to an enormously high mountain chain, and the stork descended on the highest mountain top, sat the student down, and flew on.

A delightful scent of flowers filled the air, and from the shadow filled gardens just below he heard the most beautiful birdsong.

When the young man had recovered from his initial astonishment, he saw a path that led through the trees and he followed this until he came to a high wall.

The student stood irresolute for a moment, but then caught sight of a large gate. Here he went in and entered a tree lined pathway covered with velvet soft grass and glorious sweet-smelling flowers.

After a couple of minutes' walk, he saw a magnificent castle before him. Since no one came to meet him, he entered,

and in the first room he came to the walls were covered with costly old paintings and on the tables lay large stacks of books, but no living creature appeared.

The student went on into another room, and there he found a harp with broken strings, but everything else looked as if the room had quite recently been occupied, since smoke still rose from the brazier.

The young man looked at the harp and on a whim decided to try the instrument. He tied the strings together and tuned the harp.

He then plucked a few chords, but the tones had hardly caused the echoes to ring before a voice was heard that cried: "Wonderful! Such tones could only be conjured forth by Hsiao-Hsiang\*!"

The young man turned around to see where the voice came from. An enchanting woman of heavenly beauty stood in the middle of the room. She graciously returned the student's respectful greeting and asked how had he come there? "Mortals do not usually visit these regions, and you are an extraordinarily fortunate young man!"

The student related his story, and after the lady had sat a while in deep thought, she exclaimed: "Hsiang-Li has used the stork to bring you here!"

"Who is Hsiang-Li?" asked the young man.

"Hsiang-Li lives in the Moon Palace close by. I will take you there, but first you must rest, while I question you about how things are going down on Earth."

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\* The god of music.

As the lady sat down she tapped on a stone that rang melodiously and at once two servants appeared. "Since this young gentleman has honored us with his visit, we must serve him with the best we have," she said. "Set the table as quickly as you can."

The servants disappeared and returned with the most savory dishes. The young man got the seat of honor and the lady served him herself, while she quizzed him with all kinds of queries about the Earth and its people. When his knowledge of these matters was inadequate, she laughed which made him blush quite red, begin to stammer, and the servants flashed a smile.

In his confusion, the student wanted to leave the room, but the lovely lady then informed him that the servants were ready to conduct him to Hsiang-Li.

When the young man entered her palace, which lay just a hundred paces away, he noticed that all the furniture and household implements in the first room had a round, moon-like shape. While he stood there looking around, a divinely beautiful lady entered and took his hand – this was Hsiang-Li.

She looked long into the young man's eyes and then asked: "Why did you wait so long to come to see me after you had arrived up here? Does the lady in the sky castle have anything to do with this? Which of these places do you think is the most beautiful? Come, I will show you all my wonders."

The next day Hsiang-Li took the young man by the hand and led him through a fragrant, tree-shaded avenue to a wide river where several small, rocky islands jutted up from the

surface. The babbling of the flowing waters mixed with the singing of the birds and the cries from the animals that lived along the banks.

The student was amazed to see a small vessel approaching which had sail and a rudder but no crew. Hsiang-Li explained that this was her thousand-mile boat that could make its way against wind and current as fast as an arrow.

They stepped aboard, the large sail hoisted itself, and after a few minutes the student sighted a walled city.

The lady pointed at it and said: "Over there lies the City of Jasper which I rule over. I have brought you here so that you may see your future wife before you return to Earth."

When they arrived at the city's castle, all its doors stood open. The tables were set and a delightful aroma of incense rose from countless vases around in the rooms. A painting of an enthralling young woman hung on one of the walls.

"That is your future wife," said Hsiang-Li. "Look at it closely so that you can recognize her later."

The student then lived in the palace for about three years extraordinarily happy together with Hsiang-Li.

But then one day, as he was strolling in the park, a stork flew in and settled in the meadow.

"The maker of my happiness!" cried the young man when he caught sight of it.

When the stork heard the young man's voice, it immediately came over to him, ducked underneath him like the first time, and rose up into the air over the mountaintops. A little while later it descended to earth and set the student down by his own old house door.

The young man's friends were not a little astonished at his return to them and told him how they had sought after him for three full years without success. The student related his story, but no one would believe him.

"If you have been with a supernatural being, you must have learned some secret arts, such as changing your shape, or at least have brought back a precious artifact that could have convinced us your tale was true."

The student regrettably was not able to prove anything – even his clothes were the same that he had worn when he disappeared – and his friends told him again and again that it had all been a dream until he almost believed it himself.

Meanwhile the young gentleman attended diligently to his studies and the following year he passed his second examination with honors. Several mothers now tried to marry off their daughters to him, but in vain. The magistrate only replied that his fate was already determined, and continued his studies until he thought himself sufficiently learned to win the doctorate degree.

He then set out for the capital city, but on the way he accidentally fell out of the wagon and broke an arm. He therefore had to get off at an inn and spend some days there.

Now it happened that a high official, who was traveling with his family, came to the same place seeking shelter for the night.

Unfortunately there was not room for so many, and the host was just explaining the situation, when the magistrate stepped forth and offered the official his room, which was the largest in the building, if he could just sleep on a small cot for



the night. His friendly offer was accepted and everybody settled in for the night.

As he stepped out of the room the next morning, he suddenly stopped as if turned to stone, for among the mandarin's daughters he thought he recognized the enthralling lady whose picture Hsiang-Li had showed him.

The magistrate asked the host about the guests and was told that the young lady's name was Nü and the official was her father, the imperial censor Lu-Ching, who was returning to the capital city.

When the young gentleman had recovered from his accident, he continued on his journey, and shortly after he had reached his destination he passed his examination with ease and was awarded his doctorate.

The poor student had now risen so high that thousands of families would consider it a great honor to have him as their son-in-law, but the doctor could only think of the censor's daughter, and he sent a middleman to her father to ask for her hand in marriage. However, he was rejected with the excuse that the young lady already was engaged.

The doctor became so depressed that he lost all interest in life and avoided his friends, who tried to cheer him up without knowing the cause of his distress.

One day they succeeded in getting the doctor to go along on an excursion to a temple where he met an old gentleman, who, judging by his appearance, must have been a mandarin of very high standing.

The old gentleman noticed him and asked why he was so downcast? Just then a stork flew by and settled down near

the entrance to the temple. The mandarin pointed to the bird and continued: "If you wish to marry your beloved, you may send a message with the stork, and your wish will be fulfilled."

The young man became highly excited and said: "Sir, you seem to know the story of my life. If you would deign to help me, I will be eternally grateful."

Whereupon the old gentleman replied: "Write your wish on a piece of paper," and the doctor took out his writing implements and wrote the following:

"Oh, Hsiang-Li, you wondrous being, your blessed image stands always before my eye. I will never forget the wonderful time when we, enveloped in clouds, looked into each other's eyes. Send me a greeting and advice me how I may win her, whose picture you let me see in your enchanted castle."

The mandarin rolled the paper up and tied around the stork's neck. The bird immediately swung up into the air and disappeared into the blue sky.

It returned to the temple after a few minutes, but without the paper. Instead a small pouch hung from one of its legs and in the pouch there was a small paper with the following note:

"Send your message again, and your heart will find peace.  
Your future will have nothing but sunshine.

Hsiang-Li"

The young man was struck quite dumb with astonishment as he read, and when he looked up, both the stork and the old gentleman had vanished.

On his return to his home, the doctor followed Hsiang-Li's advice and sent another message to the censor, and this time the high mandarin graciously accepted his proposal. The wedding followed shortly thereafter with much ado, and the doctor carried his wife away to his ancestral home.

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From the world of make-believe, we return to the newly betrothed. It is very rare that the pact is broken after the young couple has exchanged engagement cards – even if there should be good grounds to justify such a break.

When a young woman becomes betrothed, she is supposed to remove herself from all social engagements. This also usually happens in the higher circles, but among the middle class it is very common that the young women immediately move into their future husband's parent's home and help their mothers-in-law with their domestic tasks and, according to what I have been told by my Chinese friends, European mothers-in-law must be quite angelic compared to their Chinese sisters, who are said to generally treat their daughters-in-law to be in anything but a kind and gracious fashion.

If one of the engaged couple should die before the wedding, the consequences are quite different for the two sexes. The young man is completely relieved of all commitments and can enter into a new pact whenever he wishes, but for the young woman it is quite the opposite. If she has any regard for public opinion, she must remain unmarried as long as she lives and be faithful to her dead betrothed, even if she felt not a trace of love for him while he was alive. It is not a rare occurrence that young women prefer a voluntary death to dishonoring the deceased by entering into a new marriage.

It is also quite common that the young woman leaves her father's house when her betrothed dies and goes to live with his parents and thus fulfills her matrimonial obligations.

If the young woman remains unmarried and follows the rules of etiquette in every way, the government often recognizes her with an official notice at the end of her life or posthumously – an honor that is very highly prized.

The Peking Gazette is full of such notices. The following is just one of the many I have seen:

"The magistrate in the city of Chung-king has submitted a report to the emperor about a young lady who was engaged to the customs director's son. When the bridegroom fell sick and died before the wedding, his fiancée wanted to move to his parent's home and fulfill the duties of a daughter-in-law. However, she was not allowed to do that; instead her mother forced her to become engaged to another man. This caused the young lady to become so disconsolate that she took poison. Fortunately the doctor was sent for so quickly that he

was able to save her life, but they could not get the young lady to eat until she was allowed to carry out her first intent.

The young lady has lived with her fiancé's parents and has cared for both them and an old grandmother with the utmost devotion and love. They are extremely fond of their daughter-in-law, who in this loving way consoles them for the loss of their son. Long thorns serve instead of the costly gold pins she wore in her hair before, and instead of silk she wears plain cotton clothes. The young lady voluntarily suffers these privations, and there is no one in the family who does not show the utmost respect for her virtuous and dutiful mode of living.

Since I (the magistrate) have personally assured myself of the truth of this story, I most humbly request that this lady – even though she has not reached the prescribed age – may receive a notice of appreciation by Your Majesty's hand."

And the emperor has most graciously approved the magistrate's petition, since under the report he has with his own hand written in red ink:

"Granted,  
Huang Hsü"

The article does not inform us of the form of the notice, but it presumably has been a tablet with a poetic inscription describing the virtues of the strong-willed young Chinese woman.

## Chapter Eleven

### What the Chinese eat.

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**R**eading the flood of articles published about the daily diet of the sons of Heaven, one would almost think that the Chinese belong among the omnivorous mammals.

Permit me to first quote a "leader" from one of California's largest newspapers:

"If there is a class of unpleasant foreigners that are less liked, more ill-fated and depraved than any other, it is the Chinese. The length and width of the Californian people's loathing for the Celestials is like a wide gulf. According to public opinion their moral standards are so low that it cannot be raised. They have sunk deeper than the redskins – the miners consider them even lower than the vermin that infests the meat of the lowest animals. It is said about the bear that it

will turn away with disgust from spoiled meat, but John Chinaman is not a picky eater. He will eat all that creeps and crawls. Rats, salamanders, smelly, inedible shellfish have been and are on his menu in a land overflowing with flour, beef, ham, and other food suited for white, Christian people.

It is no wonder that the Chinese peoples' lifestyle in California meets with so much revulsion — — — —."

However, the newspaper was not allowed to pass this product off onto its readers without protest. A Chinese wrote a letter to the editor and, remarkably enough, it was printed in the next number.

"Dear Editor,

I am a Chinese and thank the Lord for that. I learned to read and write in English from a missionary and thus I became able to evaluate the countless blessings that the American nation has given us. Among these are newspapers that entertain their readers with reviling my poor countrymen as a class of people who have sunk so deep in the morass of their vices that they are beyond redemption, lost, lower than the Indians – even lower than the vermin that infests the meat of lower animals – people who eat all that creeps and crawls, etc.

Now I wish, Mr. Editor, that you present evidence for you unfriendly assertions. When did you ever see one of my compatriots eat rats, mice, or salamanders? Have you visited our shops? Did you see any of these creatures? Have you bothered to investigate before you in such inimical terms condemn our customs and traditions in your paper? Are we not treated badly enough by those who should know better?

We are subjected to persecution to the extent that we can hardly show ourselves in the streets without being abused in the most revolting manner.

Since you are so well acquainted with our customs and traditions, you presumably also know that our mother country is home to a third of the world's population. Many cities are so overpopulated that it would hardly be seen as any great wonder if any one person had to eat rats and mice, but I have never seen it happen.

It is an acknowledged fact that health mostly depend on diet. Compare diseases and life expectancy between my countrymen and the so-called Christian and civilized nationalities in California and you will find that the relationships are like 1 to 8. Who eats the most indigestible food, Mr. Editor?"

\*

"All good things come in threes," according to an old saw. Therefore, I, as a third officer who for over two years had occasion to daily inspect the Chinese navy seamen's provisions, and have participated in many repasts with my higher ranked Chinese friends ashore, must be permitted to report what I have seen and observed on this subject.

To start with the basics, we will begin with the primary food source of the Chinese, which most of us know is rice.

A bowl of cooked rice is the main component of middle class meals across the whole country, except in some areas in



China's northernmost provinces, where rice is not cultivated and the poorer families must be content with millet.

However, we readily understand that more substantial fare is needed in order to endure several hours of heavy work. We may, f. ex., imagine ourselves standing on the deck of a warship looking forward when the bosun has piped "hands to dinner." The cook's helpers and the youngest apprentices come running with long rolls of canvas, which they lay out along the white, sand-scoured deck. On this "sailors' tablecloth" they set out equally spaced serving bowls with cooked rice and as many stoneware bowls as there are persons in the "mess."\* In one of them they place the chopsticks, a pair for each man.

The table is set; the bosun pipes one more call, and the sailors gather about their respective serving bowls. They hunker down and fill their bowls. Now the cook's helpers come with the accompaniment to the rice. There are different kinds of vegetables, such as cabbage, carrots, cucumbers, onions, etc., etc. Countless varieties of vegetables are grown in Chinese kitchen gardens, so it would be tiring task to itemize a fraction of the contents of the "vegetable bowl," and there is hardly a meal prepared in China, even among the poorest, where this dish is lacking.

Besides vegetables, there is usually fried fish, cooked chicken, ducks, geese, and other meats, finely chopped and served in bowls with or without sauce.

When eating the rice bowl is held up to the mouth with the left hand and the chopsticks are held in the right hand

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\* On warships, the crews are divided into "messes" of from 6 to 12 men.

between the first and second and the second and third fingers. With these simple implements the rice is then carried into the mouth while one occasionally takes a bite from the side dishes. By long practice the Chinese are able to hold even the smallest piece and the most slippery food between the chopsticks with ease.

At the end of the meal, cans of scalding hot tea is carried around. Cold water is never drunk with the food as it is considered unhealthy – and Europeans who have been in the country a while think the same, since water from the river is not as pure as one could wish.

Fried rats and stewed mice are dishes that only exist in a fantasy world. I have never seen such delicacies nor heard any Chinese mention anything of the kind.

Of course, that does not exclude the possibility that some Chinese during a famine or other emergency have stilled their worst hunger with these un-appetizing animals, but this occurs as often in Europe as in China without anyone thinking of accusing Europeans of generally subsisting on rats and mice.

As an illustration, I will quote a little from an article that once appeared in the English periodical *Quarterly Review* under the title: Rats:

— "Rat pie is not an unknown dish in our land. Even a distinguished doctor is said to have often let it be served on his table. The rats mainly live on grain, and it is only the sense of revulsion one feels for these creatures that cause people to avoid making use of them for food.

An old Navy captain relates that he once commanded a training ship on a cruise to India. On the way home, the ship was overrun with rats that ate way too much of the crew's supply of biscuits, so they fashioned a lot of traps and set them out to catch the rats, which were then killed and served in pies, which the crew seemed to prefer to the biscuits alone for their evening meal." —

I will not even mention what people have consumed during wartime sieges. We all remember credible accounts from Paris during the last war. But I will not dwell further on exceptional cases. Let us agree that circumstances can arise in every country that will make more or less revolting foodstuffs essential to maintaining life.

As I have mentioned above, fish and poultry are very common as side dishes with the rice. The same is true for pork and goat meat. Mutton is more rare, since sheep must be imported from Mongolia and Manchuria, and the meat becomes rather dear for the common man. Raising herd animals is quite unknown in China proper, since every cultivable plot is used for raising crops. Some buffalo and cattle are raised in the southern provinces, but only as draft animals, since the Buddhists do not eat meat. This is somewhat inconvenient for the Europeans, but the deficiency has lately been alleviated by establishing European dairies and farms, where the cattle are mainly fed bean cakes and imported hay. Fresh milk of course becomes quite dear, so a lot of condensed milk is imported.

On the other hand pigs are bred and raised all over China. The poorest families own at least one pig, which they often

seem to share both house and food with. These repulsive, but beneficial creatures are found everywhere, even on the houseboats on the river.

Dog and cat meat is a more rare and less sought after commodity. Some claim that dog meat is very nourishing, and it is even used as a special diet for convalescents. In the northern provinces there is a trade in dog hams, but the price is so high that only wealthy epicures can afford such luxury.

Frogs can also be counted among the more common menu items, and thousands of these loudmouthed amphibians are daily delivered to the restaurants. They are usually caught with fishing lines in the rice paddies or ponds with a small living frog baby for bait. An older individual sees something stirring in the rushes, makes a leap, and gulps down its younger relative, which the fisherman makes his catch disgorge to be cast again.

Finally I will describe the rare delicacies that are only seen on rich men's tables, among them the celebrated dish that the Europeans call swallow nest soup. There is much dispute about what these nests are made of, but the latest scientific research seems to establish that they consist of a kind of seagrass that is found around the islands in the Indian Archipelago.

The quality of the nests varies with the places where they are found. Connoisseurs prefer those that are collected from clefts in the cliffs near the shore. These nests are particularly transparent, and since they are constantly exposed to the sea air, they taste of saltpeter.

The bird that produces this treat for the tables of the wealthy is a small swallow, *hirundo esculanta*. The price is very high, since it is often very hazardous to obtain it. The best quality often sells for up to 50 dollars per kilogram.

Swallow nest soup tastes somewhat like oyster soup and is excellent in my opinion. I have only tasted it three or four times, since it is only on very special occasions that such treats are served.

The variety of Chinese dishes available is unending as is the literature dealing with the culinary arts. Even famous poets have written about such materialistic subjects. As an example, I will quote a little from Yüan Mei's cookbook:

"If a man's natural talents are limited, the works of neither Confucius nor Mencius will make him a wise man and if the quality of the ingredients are poor even Yi Ya – the Chinese master cook – will not be able to increase the nutritional value.

Preparing food may be compared to a woman's toilette. A woman may be as beautiful as a goddess, but if she is careless with her dress and appears with stains on her clothing, she will not show herself to her best advantage. Likewise great cleanliness must be observed when preparing food. A good cook frequently dries his knife, changes his apron, and washes his hands.

Do not use too much fat in thick sauces nor let the thin ones become bland. Those who like fat can eat pork on the side and plain water is better than thin sauce with no taste.

Do not salt soup too heavily. Salt can be added according to need and personal taste."

The author continues in this vein through several chapters and the famous poet shows himself as well at home in food preparation that even a French *chef de cuisine* might learn something from reading his book.

In another place Yüan Mei strongly protests against the old custom of urging the guests to eat and relates an anecdote about a rich man who used to serve many, but poorly prepared, dishes which he insistently urged his guests to eat.

One day one of his guests threw himself down before the rich man's feet and asked with a sad mien:

"Am I not your friend?"

"Of course," replied the astonished host.

"Then I will beg you for a favor, and you must grant me this before I rise again."

"Certainly, what is your wish?"

"That you will never again invite me to dinner," cried the guest with a beseeching gesture, while the other guests burst out laughing. —

As evidence of how thoroughly the Chinese have studied the art of cooking, I will mention that there is supposed to be a work with the title "A few hints with respect to food preparation," and this little opus comprises — 318 volumes.\*

All Chinese believe in the principle that the diet must primarily consist of vegetables and animal products must be of secondary importance.

The Chinese maintain their health better than the Western nations by a sensible mixture of foodstuffs and a remarkable

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\* A Chinese volume usually has ca. 50 pages.

devotion to moderation and thus also achieve a longer average life expectancy.

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## Chapter Twelve

### Chinese pawnbrokers.

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**I**n Europe, pawnbrokers have never stood high in the social order. These individuals are usually classed with the sinners "who shall not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven."

They are looked at as a kind of jackals who gather up bones from more or less grimy sewers without asking where they come from. Bloodsuckers, who snare all the freezing and starving unfortunates in their nets in order to later press the last drop of blood out of them.

Regrettably, this image is most often correct, especially in England and in several continental states, where the pawnbrokers operate their business on a large scale favored by a larger pool of customers.



In China, there also are pawnbrokers, but they hold quite another position in society than their European "uncles" – and the relationship is not any closer than that.

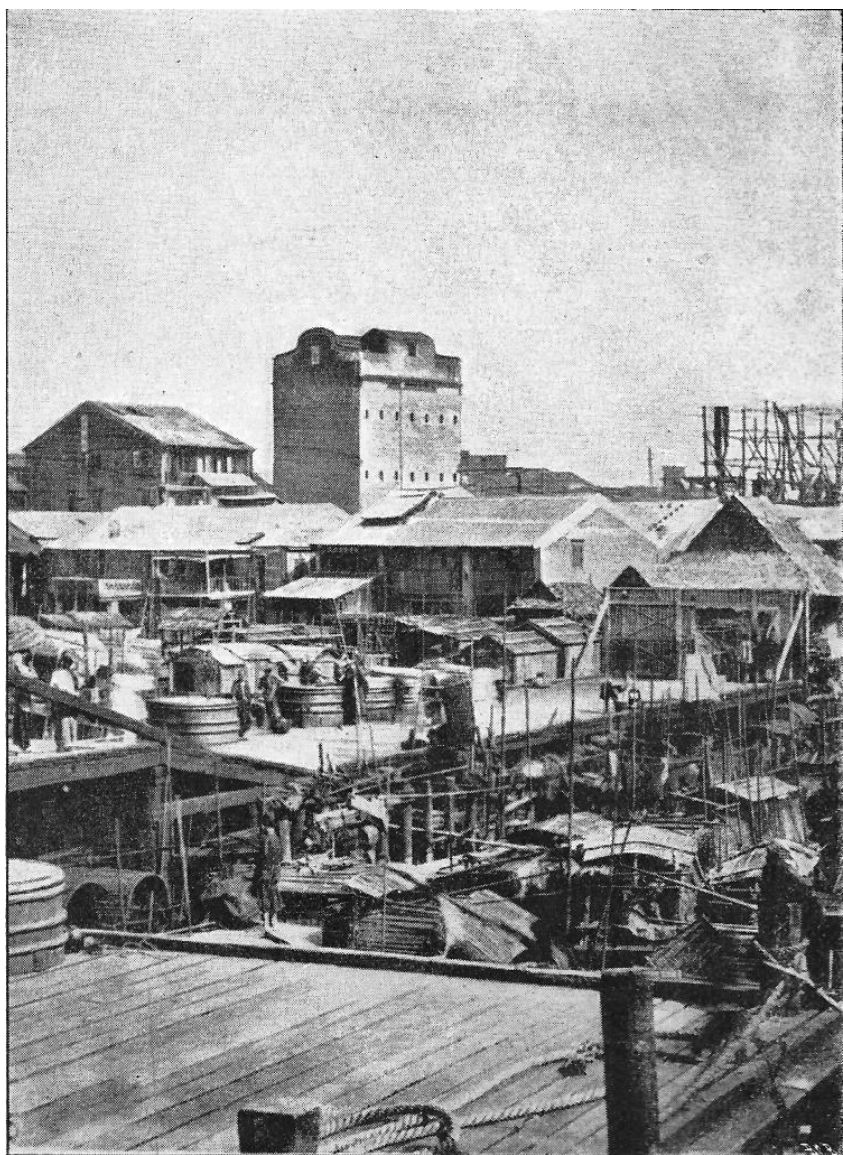
In every Chinese city we immediately discover some tall, rectangular towers that rise up above all the residential buildings. At first sight one may think this massive stone building is some military fort or a prison for death row prisoners, so threatening it looks with its small deep-set windows protected by heavy iron grilles.

But we are mistaken; these towers are dedicated to only peaceful purposes – as storehouses for pawnbrokers.

In China the pawnbroker industry is a national institution of significant importance in society; it is even considered a triumph of brotherly love. The pawnshop towers have become like hospitals for those who are wounded or fall ill in the financial fight for survival, and the "doctors" work is appreciated by both the government and the people.

It goes without saying that the men who run these businesses in China are not recruited from the same pariah castes as in Europe. The pawnbrokers usually are wealthy merchants, who enjoy general trust and respect.

When a businessman wants to establish a pawnshop, he must first inform the pertinent authorities of his intent and post surety for ca. \$25,000 to \$125,000. If the magistrate decides in favor of the man, a proposal is sent to the *fan-tai*, or provincial administrator, who investigates the applicant's financial standing and reputation from other sources, and, if everything is in order, the businessman is issued a *chao-pai*, or permit as a pawnbroker.



A pawnbroker tower.

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Since this permit is entirely a government privilege, the applicant must pay a sizeable fee before he can open for business.

It is more common to pawn one's personal effects in China than in any other place on Earth. It is considered as a quite normal business transaction. Even high officials and wealthy merchants will pawn their winter wardrobes when spring arrives, since then they do not have to worry about keeping furs and thick silk garments free of moths. Besides, they get ready money to spend and that for a very low rate of interest – according to Chinese conditions, since 3½ percent per month probably would be considered usurious in Europe.

Any object of value from diamonds to used cotton clothing can be disposed of at a pawnshop. It is not allowed to reject any customers and thus becomes a refuge for anyone in need. The man who evaluate the pawn must know the market price of the most diverse articles and must distinguish between genuine and fake stones, gold and silver jewelry, and other luxury articles.

When the price is agreed upon, the customer receives the money and a receipt with the pawn's description, number, and date, the interest rate, and the amount lent. These receipts often pass from hand to hand like bills of exchange.

The pawn is deposited on the ground floor of the tower. There the pawnbroker's employees stand behind a long, high counter, which runs from one end of the room to the other. The pawn is unpacked and provided with a wood marker, upon which the owner's name and the date are noted.

The objects then are stacked on shelves for later sorting and transfer to the tower's upper floors.

The pawnbroker always takes great care for the pawned items though he always beforehand disclaims all responsibility for any damage the items might suffer while in his possession.

The pawnshops usually have large placards mounted on their walls stating the interest rates charged, the time limits for redeeming articles, and that the shop is in no way responsible for damages or losses caused by robbers, lightning, insects, rats, mice, etc., since such must be accepted by both sides as the will of Heaven. Likewise, the pawned articles will be rendered to any person whatever who has possession of the pawn ticket, which for security's sake always carries the pawnbroker's red stamp.

The interest rate is, as mentioned above, fixed at ca. 3 percent per month. It may be thought hard for the poor to pay so much, but the Chinese are reluctant to lend money, and regular banks are not as common as with us.

According to Chinese laws, only 6 percent and more in interest is considered usurious. The pawnshops thus get only half of the interest that private bankers can charge their customers. In addition, there is a 50 percent rebate when the pawn is redeemed before the tenth month of the Chinese year. This custom is advantageous for both sides, since the poor thus are able to redeem their pawned winter clothing at a reasonable price, and on the other side the pawnbrokers take in a large amount of cash at a set time of the year.

When the 10<sup>th</sup> month approaches, one will always see crowds of poor people gathered in the large square that always surrounds each pawnbroker tower. The poor devils are anxious to get into the office before the deadline expires, since then they must pay the double interest, which in most cases mean they will just have to freeze that winter. But it often happens that the local magistrate issues a call to the pawnbrokers to take pity on the needy and it also very often happens that the call is answered, especially when there has been a bad harvest or flooding in the district.

According to the law, all pawned articles must be redeemed within 2 years; otherwise they will become the pawnbroker's property. This is considered a necessary rule, since the storerooms cannot be forever filled with objects that do not belong to the pawnbroker and from which he does not get any rent.

After a flood or a bad harvest it often happens that the towers become overfilled with goods and then a large placard is posted on the wall informing the public that no new pawn will be accepted until sufficiently existing stock has been redeemed. But then the government sometimes steps in to help and opens a government pawnshop where all items are accepted, even the sorriest pieces of clothing and old kitchenware, with no interest charge.

The late governor of Shantung,\* Chang Yao, thus during the last flood on the Huang Ho opened a shop in his capital city. Chang Yao, who had begun his career as a rice carrier, is

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\* Shantung is a province with about the same population and area as the Iberian Peninsula.

among the most remarkable men of the new era. Though millions of dollars have passed through his hands, he always lived in poverty. It is said that Chang's belongings often were found within the pawnshop towers, since he often would give whatever was nearest at hand to the poor.\*

No wonder that Chang Yao immediately thought of the towers when the flood came, since he only had ready money on the day when he received his annual appanage.

A long song honoring him that came out two years ago also mention the great service he did for the poor by the establishment of the public pawnshop towers. "Chang of the Blue Heaven" as the people called the great humanitarian will always live in memory as long as the pawnbroker business survives in China.

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\* Among my collection of Chinese curiosities, there is a large brown silk tapestry that probably at one time has hung in Chang Yao's audience chamber. His life history, which I once saw a translation of in a Norwegian newspaper, is written on the cloth with several hundred gilded characters. After a pawn goods auction this interesting "manuscript" must have found its way to Peking, where I bought it, aft.

## Chapter Thirteen

### A dinner at the banker Ching Lao-ping's house.

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**T**he well-to-do families always give parties during the festive New Year's holiday. Through my close friend Ho Chao-kuin I received an invitation to dinner with a wealthy banker named Ching Lao-ping.

Mr. Ching owns, like most wealthy people in China, his own temple or "the family's gathering hall," where their ancestors' memorial tablets are displayed.

The Chinese usually hold their parties here. They do not find anything offensive in this custom, quite to the contrary. When mandarins invite consuls or other European officials for some occasion or other, it is very common that the event takes place in a temple.



The host met me with a smiling face as I entered, and after we had bowed down for each other, struck the palms of our hands together and moved them up and down a few times with the common exclamation *Hao, hao*, which altogether answers to the European "*Bonjour*," etc., I am led into the hall, where the host's son and Ho Chao-kuin, our shared teacher, met me and shook hands with me in the European manner, but I quietly whispered to them that the "barbarian" customs should be suspended for the time being. Chinese party, Chinese etiquette.

Ho had to tell another gentleman what I had said, and the whole company seemed to accept my remark with approval.



A festive get-together.

The hall was very elegantly furnished. Carved and gilded chairs with soft cushions with red cloth covers. The floor is covered with grey-white marble tiles, and on the walls hang roll after roll of silk or paper, some with inscriptions from the Chinese Bible – the 9 *King*\* – some with fine paintings by native artists.

A half score large glass lanterns hang from the ceiling. Their red candles are already lit since it is almost 5 o'clock. The glass plates of the lanterns are decorated with caricature drawings that depict social scenes and add to the festive ambience when lit. In one corner of the hall the family's most cherished objects can be seen. A lot of red wooden tablets upon which their deceased ancestors' names are inscribed with gold characters are displayed on a low platform. Red wax tapers are lighted before each of these and beside them stand porcelain bowls filled with fruits and pastries – a symbol that the family has not forgotten their dead.

And now to the table. The host bids us to take our places, which are arranged according to the guests' ranks and positions in society. As customary, everybody keep their hats and caps on, since it is considered impolite to remove them.

Before each place setting stand a wine-cup and a small plate which is divided in the middle and filled with almonds and melon seeds. Further, there is a sauce bowl beside which lie a couple of ivory chopsticks, a three inch long porcelain spoon, and several squares of paper with which to dry one's mouth.

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\* The writings of Confucius, Mencius, and Lao-tse.

In the middle of the table stands a brown lacquered tray which is divided into a score partitions. In each of these there is a small bowl filled with dried and preserved fruits, sliced ham, smoked minnows, etc.

The host first pours wine into his cup while he bows and turns his face towards his ancestors' shrine – this is the memorial toast, our *bragebeger*.<sup>\*</sup> Thereafter he fills the guests' cups, and as he does, each guest bows and holds his cups in his left hand. The host gives a sign, wishes us welcome, and everybody empty their cups together. This ends the ceremonial part of the dinner, and the servants carry in the dishes.

1. Roast *samlai* with spicy sauce.
2. Sliced hardboiled eggs and champignons.
3. Poultry in sauce with sliced ham.
4. Wild ducks with stewed bamboo sprouts.
5. Shredded pork with rice flour sauce.
6. Roast pheasant with stewed cabbage and carrots.
7. Boiled fish.
8. Marrow cooked in oil.
9. Miscellaneous bakery products.
10. Roast hare with hot sauce.
11. Stewed crab, and finally:
12. Swallows nest soup and rice.

Between each course one takes a couple of puffs from the common silver pipes, which are tended by a servant who stands behind each guest.

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<sup>\*</sup> ["Bragging cup."]

It is of course a given that all food must be cut up in suitably small pieces; otherwise one would have to use knife and fork in the European manner. I was offered such implements, but politely declined, since I had acquired a minimal degree of proficiency in the use of *Kwat-tze*, as chopsticks are called in Chinese, by a little private practice in Ho's home beforehand.

The "barbarians'" practice of serving the food at the table is quite incomprehensible for the Chinese. I once saw a very amusing caricature of a dinner in a European home, where the host stood struggling with carving a large roast with sweat pouring down his face. Why not have the servants do that? ask the Chinese.

As may be seen from the menu, there are no dishes that we barbarians cannot eat with a good appetite. Except for the sauces, which I was not accustomed to, I thoroughly enjoyed the dinner, and we may well take this dinner as a typical example of what is served in an affluent Chinese home. Boiled rice play a larger or lesser role, all according to what the host's financial situation may be.

After the meal, small silver bowls with warm water was carried around, so that the guests could wipe their fingers with a small hand-towel dipped in the water.

The table was cleared, pipes were lit, and tea was served.

## Chapter Fourteen

### The Chinese ladies' "golden lilies."

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**J**ust as the Chinese cannot find anything beautiful about the "barbarian" women's intricate corseting systems, we have difficulty finding the Chinese ladies' pressed together feet in accordance with our sense of beauty.

I do not know the origin of the barbaric fashion of the European and American ladies, but it deserves just as much disparagement as foot-binding in China.

The Chinese women only hurt themselves, while the West's corset-bound ladies sin against the coming generations.

There are very few Chinese who agree about when foot-binding first came into fashion and who brought it about.

A historian tells us that it was the gruesome Taki, consort of the last ruler of the Chang Dynasty (1166 – 1121 B.C.) This vain woman is said to have been born with club feet. She could not stand the constant derisive comments her own sex made behind her back about her impediment and got the emperor to issue a decree commanding that all girl babies should have their feet compressed at birth. This was one of the many gruesome edicts that later cost this worthy ruling pair their throne and lives.

Others think that the fashion originated with Pan-sei, who lived a millennium and a half later. She was a woman of rare beauty and charm, which caused her to attract the attention of the emperor, and she became his favorite concubine.

In order to rise even higher in her lord's favor Pan-sei had her feet pressed together until the underside became shaped like a half moon. Every evening she danced for her master in a room whose floor was covered in gold leaf.

One day she had secretly let lilies be engraved on her shoe soles, and when she danced, lilies were imprinted on the gold leaf.

The emperor was delighted by this and cried: "Each of your steps creates a golden lily!"

This is said to be the origin of the convention of referring to the ladies' feet as "golden lilies."

It is also said that all the court ladies followed Pan-sei's example and thereafter the fashion spread across the country.

The torture of the poor little girls usually begins at five years of age. The toes, except the big toe, are bent inwards and held in place by strong cotton bandages. In the beginning

the bandages are taken off each evening and replaced with tight "sleeping shoes."

If one visits a Chinese home in the morning heartrending cries can often be heard from the victims of this abhorrent practice when the bindings are put on again.

The mothers usually bathe the girls' feet with rice liquor, which makes the skin hard and less sensitive. Potash alum is also often used.

Later on, when the feet have got the right shape, the bandages are changed less often, but they are still usually used throughout life; partly so that the feet will not grow larger and partly to strengthen them while walking, which otherwise would be almost impossible.

Obviously, the Chinese beauties' legs are weakened right up to the knees, since the blood is prevented from flowing down and nurturing the muscles, but it is said that the musculature from the knees upward becomes so much the stronger.

A lady's shoe is sometimes not longer than 7 centimeters, but is often up to twice that.

The size of the foot depends largely on the regularity and tightness with which the bandages are applied. Therefore, when a girl with unusually small feet is seen, people will say: "Oh, what a good and caring mother she must have!"

The fair one will have lots of suitors, and the chosen young swain will cover the "golden lilies" with burning kisses.

The Chinese women usually walk with short, quick steps and swing their arms, just as we would do if we were to walk

on our heels. The poets compare the ladies' walk with "the movements of the willow when the wind is blowing."

Sometimes we see two of these "swaying willows" walking together and supporting each other, or they hold on to a servant or a little grandson as walking staffs.

But otherwise it is quite remarkable how easily the Chinese women move on their bandaged feet. They dance and run, walk for miles, and carry out a maid's duties without being noticeably hampered by walking on these stilts.

Experience shows that the foot-binding is not nearly as harmful as one would think.

An old mission doctor thus wrote: "Although a number of women come to the hospital afflicted by various diseases and blame them on their feet, it has been shown only in a couple of cases that their ills derived from the compression of their feet. It cannot be said with any degree of certainty that this fashion is in any way harmful their health. After a thorough investigation of numerous cases in all classes of society it is not apparent that it causes so much misery as could be expected from the harsh treatment their feet are subjected to in their childhood. As painful as this fashion may seem to be, it is on the whole perhaps less damaging to their health and causes less inconvenience than the ruling fashions among Western women."

I once asked one of my Chinese friends: "Tell me truly, which do you find most attractive, women with bound feet or with natural?"

"Well, I prefer the natural, and I told my father when I returned from the University in Berlin that I would prefer a



wife with natural feet, but he replied: 'Suit yourself. If you want to take a wife from the European prostitutes in the treaty ports or from the Cantonese boat people, you may do so. They are the only ones, except for the Manchu women, who do not have bound feet.'

"Of course, I had no wish to do that, but since I got married, my wife has always worn European shoes. She herself likes it much better and I have told her I do not mind if her feet grow a little larger."

There are many Chinese who condemn foot-binding, but it is almost impossible to escape from the tyranny of fashion.

The second emperor of this dynasty, the great Kang Hi, ventured to see if the imperial power was strong enough to eradicate the custom, but even he had to give up. In the last century, even the Manchu women have begun to bind their feet despite stern edicts against it.

However, Kang Hi did make it difficult for this abhorrent practice to become common among the rosy-cheeked Manchu daughters, since he gave orders that no woman with bound feet should be allowed to enter the imperial palaces.

His successors have left this rule in force, and thus no maiden with unnatural feet has any hope of becoming empress or a court lady.

Several Chinese authors have argued strongly against foot-binding. One of them thus expressed his detestation for this practice by picturing the inventor standing before Buddha, who sentences him to 700 years of hellish tortures as a taste of the punishments that await him in the Eternity.

Another scribe felt that the punishment could not be less than that the originator be forced to sew a million pair of ladies' shoes with his own fingers.

It is thus apparent that this fashion, so abhorrent in European eyes, is not universally admired in China either.

But we can see how strongly and to what extent the foot-binding has taken hold in the general population when we see the most repulsive beggar witches to be encountered in the streets. They are covered in rags that perhaps must be tied down at night to be prevented from creeping away – but look at their feet! They are just fine; eight to ten centimeters long and bound with new bandages!

The Christian missionaries have been much torn over the foot-binding problem. The Protestants usually let their orphanage children keep their natural feet, which – parenthetically speaking – are both small and well-formed.

The Catholic Mission on the other hand believes that it is best for the time being to consider the girls' future and continue the foot-binding, since poor girls without a dowry and without dolls' feet are practically doomed to remain unmarried.

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## Chapter Fifteen

### The Chinese emperor's wedding.

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**O**n the 12<sup>th</sup> of January 1875 the young Tung She Emperor mounted the dragon and flew up into the blue Heaven and his cousin, the four year old Tsai-tien, was chosen to occupy the vacant seat on the Dragon Throne under the name we Euro-peans know him – Kuang Hsü, or "Illustrious Successor."

The years passed, and the time came when the emperor's nearest relatives in accordance with Chinese custom had to choose a spouse for him. In 1886 his aunt, the famous empress dowager Tzu-hsi, issued a proclamation wherein all eligible Manchu girls between 12 and 16 years of age were invited to come to Peking.

A few weeks after the announcement the parents with their marriageable daughters appeared for the first bride screening. There were several hundred of them, and on the appointed day they were led into the imperial place inner apartments by their parents. The young emperor soon

appeared followed by the empress dowager and several eunuchs. They went over to a table where there lay a lot of small wood tablets whereon the names and ages of the attending young ladies were inscribed.

The empress dowager took one of the tablets and read aloud the inscribed name and the young maid was led forward. After having spoken a few words with the girl, she wrote the number 1 on the tablet and replaced it on the table – a sign that she was favorable impressed with the girl. A second was called forward, but her tablet was handed back to her, which meant she was rejected.

The process continued in this way until half a hundred had been selected. These fortunate girls who found favor in the eyes of the empress dowager now were sent back to their respective lodgings – for in a couple of days to undergo a more thorough examination. After this, their number was further reduced, and the chosen beauties were allowed to return to their hometowns after their names, ages, family relationships, etc., had been recorded. They were also ordered to prepare themselves for one last trial in the imperial palace in a couple of years' time.

In October 1888 these ladies – thirty in number – were ordered to appear. A great banquet was held for them, and the next day they were led in before the empress dowager in six groups, and this time she made her final selection. She – because the young emperor apparently did not get an opportunity to express any preference to his dominating aunt. The empress dowager announced the result to the nation in the following proclamation:

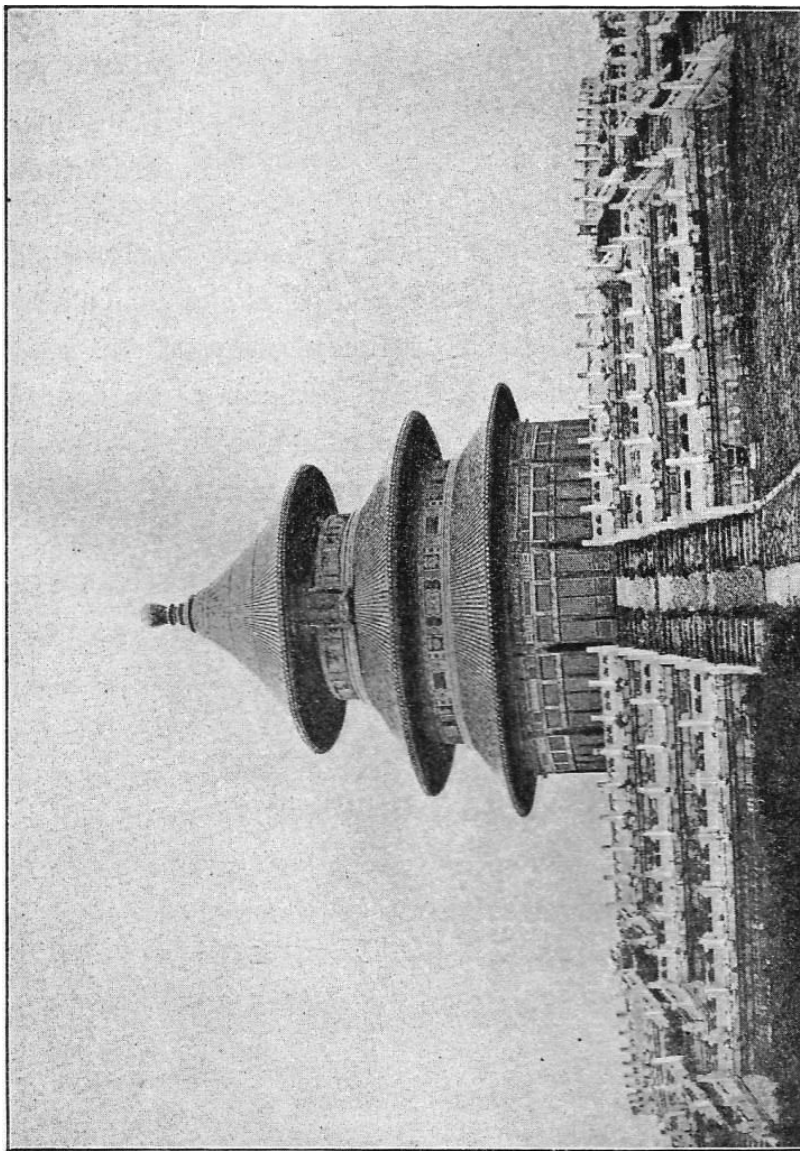
"Since the Emperor reverently entered upon the succession to the great patrimony he has been gradually growing up to manhood, and it is fitting that a person of high character should be selected to be his Consort and assist him in the duties of the palace, to the end that the high position of Empress may be fittingly filled and the Emperor be supported in the pursuit of virtue. The choice having fallen upon Yeh-ho-na-la, the daughter of Deputy-Lieutenant General Kuei Hsiang, a maiden of virtuous character and becoming and dignified demeanour, we command that she be appointed Empress."

The chosen bride was daughter of the empress dowager's own brother – which may have had some influence on the choice.

As an engagement present, the emperor sent 4 fully accoutered horses, 10 suits of armor, 100 bolts of silk cloth, and 200 bolts of cotton fabric. The presents were carried to the father's temporary quarters in one of the palaces by a prince with elaborate ceremonies. In the afternoon of the same day an engagement banquet was given. Neither the bride's father nor her mother was present at this table. Special fêtes for them were held in other halls of the palace.

On January 5<sup>th</sup> 1889 the bridal presents were delivered. They consisted of 400 *lot* gold, 10,000 *lot* silver, a gilded tea service, 1,000 bolts silk cloth, 20 Mongolian riding horses, and 40 carriage horses.

The bride's parents, brothers, and their servant staffs also received many costly gifts on this occasion.



The Temple of Heaven.

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The religious ceremonies connected with the wedding consisted of an imperial prince being sent a couple of days ahead to:

1. The Temple of Heaven.
2. The Altar of the Earth.
3. *Tai-mino* – temple honoring the emperor's ancestors.
4. *Feng-shien-tien* – a small temple in the northeast corner of the Forbidden City, where memorial tablets of the deceased emperors are kept.

to formally inform *Shang-ti* – the Ruler on High – and the ancestors' spirits that the emperor's wedding will take place on the 26<sup>th</sup> of February.

The prescribed wedding ceremonies began in the early morning. The court chamberlain has 40 banner and standard bearers form up on an open square near the *Taiho* – the Hall of Supreme Harmony, where the Chinese imperial enthronement and marriage ceremonies are held.

Outside the middle gate to this building, 2 palanquins are positioned, each carried by 36 men. After them come 5 carriages, each drawn by two horses, and lastly, 5 elephants and 20 riding horses.

Several music bands are arranged on the porch of the Hall and all the princes and high officials have gathered outside one of the entrances. A gilt tablet, on which the empress dowager's wedding announcement and the gold seal that the new empress will use is inscribed, are now placed on the two palanquins and brought into the throne room. An imperial scepter is placed on a table along with the tablet and seal.

The Grand Council and the culture ministry's high officials, the palace guard, and some other personages stand



in rows along the stairways, and when everything is in order, the senior Grand Secretary and the Minister of Culture go to the imperial palace and request that the emperor appear at the Hall of Supreme Harmony.

His Majesty dressed in his magnificent wedding attire, steps into a sedan chair and leaves the palace with the ministers walking ahead to the main entrance to the Taiho.

The music strikes up and the emperor strides into the hall, where he first inspects the tablet and the seal. Having verified that the inscriptions are correct, he seats himself on the throne and the music stops.

All present kneel down, turn their faces toward the north, and touch the floor 9 times with their foreheads. One of the heralds commands absolute silence and reads out in a loud voice:

"His Imperial Majesty has received a decree from the Empress Regent whereby Yeh-ho-na-la, daughter of Deputy-Lieutenant General Kuei Hsiang, has been chosen to become Empress. We have likewise been commanded to grasp the scepter and undertake the ceremonies appropriate for the solemn inauguration of the Empress."

After this imperial manuscript has been read, one of the Grand Secretaries lifts the scepter that lies on the table and hands it to one of the princes who is kneeling on the floor.

The music again plays a solemn hymn and the emperor steps down from the throne and returns to his palace.

The court chamberlain now marshals the procession that is to bring the gilded tablet and the seal to the bride. The secretaries of the Ministry of Culture march in front, then the

prince carrying the scepter, both palanquins, and behind these the imperial parasol and a lot of banners and standards.

When the procession passes by the Taiho's main gate, the future empress' retinue joins the parade and behind them comes a number of palanquins with the empress' accouterments and finally half a hundred lackeys. The procession moves with great solemnity toward the palace wherein the imperial bride has been temporarily lodged.

Here a number of ladies in gala costumes have gathered to assist the empress with her toilette and later at the ceremonies. A table on which to place the scepter is set up in one of the large halls. Before it stand several incense tubs and to the left and right a pair of smaller tables where the gilded tablet and the seal will lie.

When the procession arrived at the main gate of the palace, the bride's father and her other male relatives came out to meet it. The bridal finery was off-loaded and given to the servant eunuchs, who again delivered it to the ladies in waiting. The prince read aloud the contents on the tablet to the bride's father and then handed the scepter, the seal, and the tablet to some eunuchs who carried them inside and laid them on the tables.

In the meantime the bride has completed her toilette. She has donned a blue silk gown embroidered with gold dragon figures. On the front there are gold embroidered characters for "*Wan-fu*" and "*Wan-sui*," which freely translated mean "Eternal Luck" and "Eternal Life."

On her head she wears a hat of red silk bordered with black sable fur and topped with a kind of trifoliate crest. On

each part shines a cluster of pearls consisting of 3 small oblong pearls of rare beauty and 17 more ordinary pearls surrounding a large, costly pearl in a gold setting, and above this rises a golden phoenix., On the backside of the hat, below the crest, sits a golden pheasant with 16 inlaid pearls in its back and 325 smaller pearls outlining its tail feathers.

Her necklace and bracelets represent an enormous value in turquoise, corals, and diamonds. The handkerchief, which is carried in a small belt, is green, richly embroidered, and has jeweled tassels. So costly a bridal dress has hardly been worn by any other earthly princess.

A eunuch comes and reports that all is ready and accompanied by her mother the bride with her entourage enter into the hall, where she kneels down on a silk cushion on the floor by the three tables while a female herald reads the emperor's proclamation and the inscription on the seal. The bride then rises, kneels down again 3 times and bows 9 times facing north.

A eunuch then comes and takes the scepter – representing the emperor – from the table and carries it back to the prince, who in the meantime has been waiting in one of the anterooms. He now returns to the emperor's palace together with the whole procession and informs His Majesty that his mission has been carried out.

The emperor later in the afternoon paid a formal visit to the empress regent and thereafter proceeded to the throne hall under the same ceremonies as in the morning. After His Majesty had taken his seat on the throne accompanied by the music, silence was again commanded, and the herald read

another proclamation wherein it announced that the empress regent had commanded that Her Majesty, the future empress, be brought to her.

The emperor then stepped down from the throne and returned to his palace.

The court chamberlain again formed up the same procession as in the morning and set it in motion toward the bride's residence with the imperial prince bearing the scepter.

Here a gathering had now formed of all the married princesses and the wives of several high dignitaries. One of them hands her an apple and the others swing Tibetan incense around her sedan chair, which she now enters, heavily veiled. The prince with the scepter mounts his horse and rides up to the palace gate, while the bride's father and her other relatives kneel down. The bridal procession is led by a music band followed by some of the bride's future court attendants bearing parasols, banners, standards, etc. Then follow the palanquins with the tablet and the seal and the bride in her magnificent sedan chair with an ornamental golden phoenix on the roof and finally the imperial chamberlains and a company of the palace guards on horseback.

On arrival at the Golden Bridge, the officers and chamberlains dismount and go on afoot, while the enlisted guardsmen remain behind. When the procession approaches the emperor's palace, the bride's sedan chair is set down, and all the males present, except the eunuchs, withdraw out of sight.

The married princesses now approach the bride and respectfully ask her to step out of the sedan chair. She does so

and is led into the palace's inner chambers after having received an apple and a bottle filled with pearls and gold coins.

She stops by the entrance to the bridal chamber and waits for her exalted spouse. A saddle and a bow and arrow lie on the threshold. The emperor arrives with solemn strides, takes up the bow and shoots the arrow into the saddle. On completion of this ceremony, he lifts the bride's veil and in theory sees his wife's face for the first time.

Two princesses then lead Yeh-ho-na-la into the bridal chamber, the emperor following immediately behind and both sit down on the bed, he on the right side, she on the left. The princesses hand them two porcelain bowls connected by a red silk cord and filled with warm wine. They drink it up while holding arms cross-linked. The princesses then serve them a food prepared with many mysterious ingredients called "Sons and grandsons pastry" and a soup called "Brew for a long life."

The bridal bed is now made ready – and the exalted couple is finally allowed to be alone.

The princesses awakened the young empress at 3 o'clock the next morning. When Her Majesty had completed dressing, she and the emperor knelt down on a silk cushion and prayed to *Chang-ti* and his angels to hold their protective hands over them.

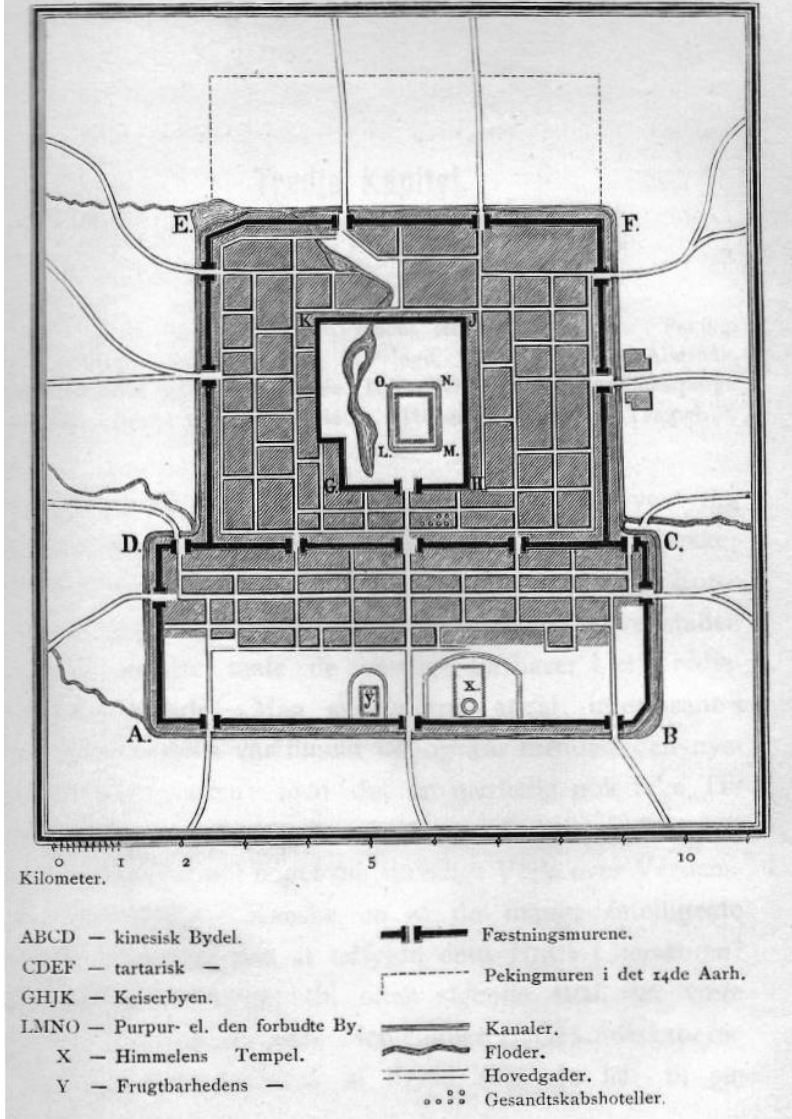
Thereafter the imperial couple went to a temple near the palace, where tablets with the names of the emperor's ancestors stand on display. His Majesty presented his spouse to his ancestors after which they both knelt and prayed that

their protective spirits might always watch over them and the conduct of their governing responsibilities. From the family temple they proceeded to the empress dowager's residence to pay her a formal visit. They bowed down 9 times for this formidable lady to whom they owed their exalted position. With deep reverence the emperor thanked her for all that she had accomplished for the dynasty and the nation. The empress regent replied that she had done her duty and handed over her own scepter to her nephew signifying the end of her regency.

The imperial couple then returned to their own residence. The empress once more kneeled down in the bridal chamber and touched the floor 9 times with her forehead and then gave the emperor a scepter inlaid with costly jewels as a wedding present. Her husband gave her a similar scepter – and with that the wedding ceremonies were complete.

On the 3<sup>d</sup> of March the emperor's wedding was formally announced over the whole Chinese empire and on the following day Kuang Hsü and Yeh-ho-na-la's official enthronement took place.

# Plan over Peking.



ABCD – Chinese quarter.

CDEF – Tartar quarter.

GHJK – Imperial quarter.

LMNO – Purple- or the Forbidden City.

X – The Temple of Heaven.

Y – Temple of Fertility.

The fortress walls.

The Peking wall in the 14<sup>th</sup>  
century.

Canals.

Rivers.

Main streets.

Embassies



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## II

# The History of East Asia after the Treaty of Shimonoseki

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## Chapter One

### The Treaty of Shimonoseki

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**O**n the 17<sup>th</sup> of April 1895 Li Hung-chang and Count Ito Hirobumi signed a peace treaty on behalf of their respective nations at Shimonoseki.

Thus the so-called Sino-Japanese War ended without the wide-ranging consequences that the colonial European great powers had hoped for.

The total ignorance of East Asia's history and misleading reports on the Chinese empire's military establishment in combination with the war correspondents' quite phenomenal powers of imagination was the reason for the "disappointment" being so great.

The largest and oldest state that the sun has ever shined upon did not break up into its separate elements. It's more than 5,000 years old foundation was not even rocked despite all the dire prophesies in the European newspapers – in other words, there was no feast for hungry land grabbers.

The diplomats that are concerned with East Asian problems have once more been cautioned to refrain from prophesying until they have acquired the necessary historical knowledge.

The white race cannot be accused of laziness in the last couple of centuries in its attempts to undermine the foundations of the Chinese state. Everything has been tried – opium, missionaries, cannon, diplomatic artifices, etc.

But what have the results been? Just that the areal extent of the Chinese empire has been more than doubled, and the nation that in 1697 had a population of barely 80 million now is 5 times as numerous.

Today there still exists – despite the brilliant Japanese military victory – a homogenous nation of ca. 400 million of the most industrious, hardest, most peaceful, sober, and in many respects the most talented inhabitants on earth, ready to take up the hardest fight for survival – in the service of peace.

The great peaceful nation and the warlike sons of Japan have both learned a lot since the war broke out in 1894 – but it is hardly lessons that the white race will profit from.

\*

For those who have not read my work on the war in East Asia, I will briefly describe its origins and major events.

The relations between China and Japan have never been as good as could be wished for between two neighboring nations; their national characters are much too different for that.

As I have often remarked, the Chinese are the world's most peaceful nation. They consider war to be a crime and the military profession to be discreditable for respectable citizens.

The Japanese on the other hand is the most warlike nation in Asia. The clashing of swords has always been heavenly music to Japanese ears. The island empire's great sons have inscribed their names in the annals of history with their swords. According to old folk tales, the gods carried double-edged swords, and the sun goddess forged the sword she gave to Japan's first *mikado* from the tail of a dragon.

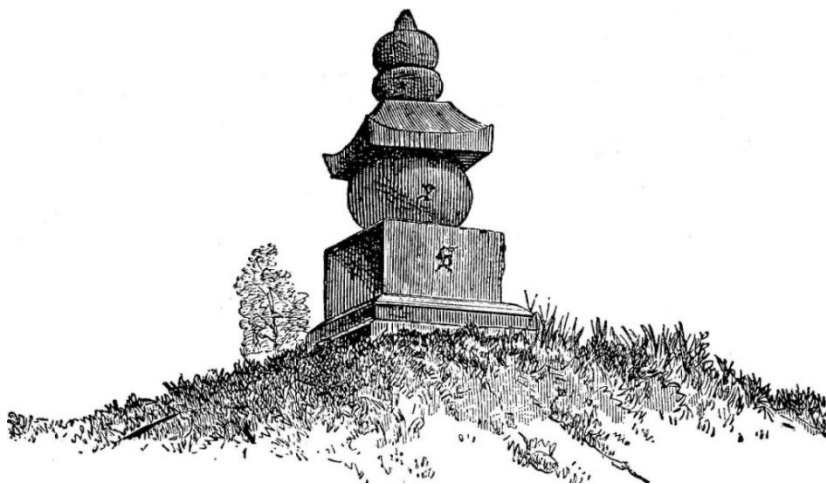
It is therefore no wonder that these warlike people have often also tested the power of the sword outside the boundaries of their homeland. In the last millennium the Japanese have played the same role on the coasts of China and Korea as the Norse Vikings on the coasts of England and France.

Korea has been especially exposed. Time after time this unfortunate peninsula has been harried and plundered. Countless ruins testify even today about the warlike islanders' deeds against their peaceful neighbors. In Japan's old capital Kyoto there is the famous Ear Tomb. Under it rest 10,000 pickled Korean ears – human ears that these sea rovers brought back as trophies from a gruesome raid three centuries ago.\*

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\* [This monument – the *Mimizuka Mound* – actually holds the noses and ears of at least 38,000 Koreans. It is not the only one in Japan, but the best known. This war of Hideyoshi's killed ca. 185,000 Koreans and 30,000 Chinese, according to the Japanese records.]

Fortunately for the island empire, the martial spirit of its sons did not weaken during this long period of peace. Internal mini-wars between the great fief lords constantly kept it alive. When the European squadrons began to cruise around the Japanese islands like voracious birds of prey in the middle of this century, the nation woke up and understood the seriousness of the situation. The Japanese realized that it was only by assuming Western civilization in military respects that they could expect to keep the European robber nations away from their glorious homeland.



The "Ear Tomb" in Kyoto.

Then the social revolution broke loose in 1868. The *daimyos* gave up their fiefs and Japan got a strong central authority, a new military organization was carried out on the European model, and the island empire emerged victorious from its encounter with Western civilization.

In the course of twenty years the Japanese reformers headed by the emperor made their homeland esteemed and respected over the whole civilized world – except in China.

The conservative Chinese have always for diverse reasons looked down on their diminutive neighbors, and this disdain further increased when the Japanese also began "aping" the red-haired barbarians' mode of dress and manners.

The Japanese desire to put the Chinese in their place grew apace with their irritation over the phlegmatic superciliousness of the Chinese.

The Japanese well knew their neighbors' weak side – their military defense systems, and by defeating them militarily the Japanese hoped to quickly win their objectives. Therefore the government stressed bringing the Japanese army and navy up to such strength that the outcome of a war would be assured in advance.

Since 1868 there has been several threats of armed conflict between the neighbors, but the Chinese government has constantly given way on the principle that the greatest mark of superiority lies in conciliation. The rulers in China fortunately have never had the same concept of the demands of honor as their Western colleagues.

But in 1894 the Japanese still managed to force the desired break. The regrettable conditions in Korea gave them the necessary pretext. The king of Korea had requested his overlord, the emperor of China, for assistance in quelling an uprising that threatened to grow into a full-scale revolution. Though the Peking government on principle never interfered in the internal affairs of its vassal states, it was decided to

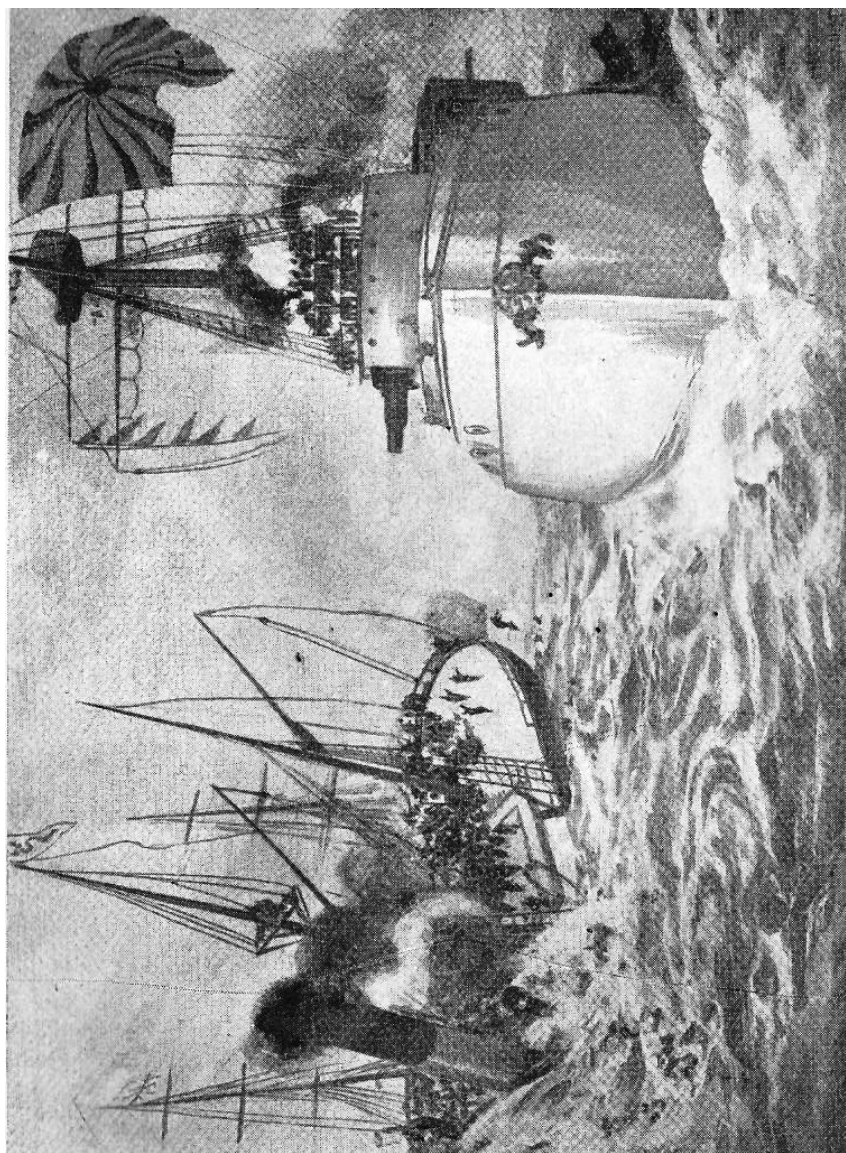


make an exception in this case and comply with the request. Ca. 2,000 men were sent over to Asan, and when the rebels saw that they would be met with serious force, they immediately fell back.

But now the Japanese entered the arena. During June and July 1894 around 10,000 men were sent over to the peninsula in small detachments in order to protect Japan's "interests." The Japanese had played with diplomatic intrigues in Korea since 1870 and now the government decided the time was right to harvest the fruits. The factor that most contributed to speed up the pace of events was the ruling party's difficulties in parliament. The prime minister, Count Ito Hirobumi, had lost votes on several issues and it was deemed essential to divert the nation's attention away from its internal strife.

Li Hung-chang did all that was in his power to avert the break, but all in vain. Japan wanted a war and the European powers did not feel obliged to mediate – there might be some opportunity to fish in muddy waters.

On the 23<sup>d</sup> of July the Japanese troops in Korea took King Li Hui prisoner and moved down toward Asan to drive the Chinese army corps out of Korea. At the same time the Japanese fleet headed for the Korean coast. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of July it intercepted the Chinese troop transport "*Kowshing*," which was carrying 1,200 men to Asan. Though war had not been declared, the ship was sunk by the Japanese cruiser "*Naniwa*." Only 200 men saved themselves by swimming ashore. The rest drowned or were killed by machine gun fire.



*"Naniwa" and "Kowshing"*

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Marshal Yamagata.

A couple of ships of the Pechihli province's fleet were attacked on the same day. One was blown up, but another escaped and made its way to the naval port Wei-hai-wei in a badly damaged condition.

Two days later the Chinese were driven out of their fortifications at Asan and withdrew first southward and then northward along Korea's east coast.

Japan could hardly have done more to force a break with China. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of August the emperors of both countries issued their official declarations of war.

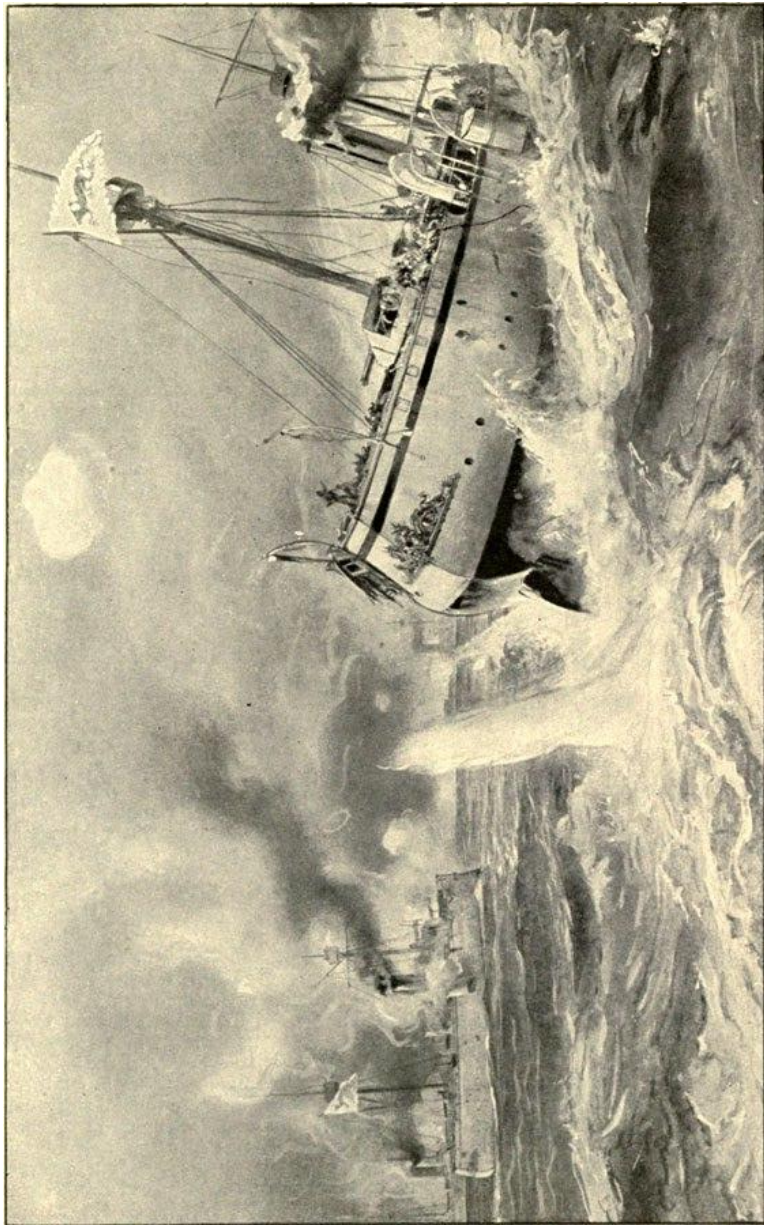
Since the Kingdom of Korea fell under the jurisdiction of the Pechihli province, the Chinese emperor ordered Li Hung-chang in his capacity as governor general of the province to drive the Japanese out of Korea.

However, this was rather difficult to do with the few and mediocre troops that Pechihli could muster in the field. During August 20,000 men were brought to the peninsula, but the well armed and brilliantly led Japanese army detachments soon forced the Chinese to retreat.

The first serious battle was fought at Pingyang between 15,000 Chinese under General Yeh and 25,000 Japanese under Marshal Yamagata. After 12 hours of intense fighting, General Yeh had to withdraw northward with a loss of 6,000 men.

A couple of days later, on the 17<sup>th</sup> of September, the greatest sea battle in modern history took place at the mouth of the Yalu River. Admiral Ting with most of Pechihli's fleet had just escorted some transport ships and lay at anchor when Admiral Ito came steaming up with about an equally large squadron of the Japanese fleet.

The battle began at noon and lasted until 5:30 PM, when Admiral Ito signaled to stop firing and headed south followed a part of the way by the Chinese armored cruisers "*Ting-Yuen*" and "*Chen-Yuen*."



The sinking of the Chinese cruiser "*Chih-Yuen*" in the Battle of the Yalu.

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Admiral Ting held the scene of battle, but the battle must still be considered a draw, since the Chinese suffered severe losses and had to sail to Port Arthur for repairs.

There were no further battles at sea.

Meanwhile the Japanese army continued its march northward and on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October crossed the Yalu River, which forms the border between Korea and Manchuria. At the same time an army corps of a little over 20,000 men was set ashore by Talienwan [Dalian Bay] to take the strong fortress at Port Arthur from the landside. Since the defenses were led as poorly as possible, the Japanese made easy work of it, and on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November Manchuria's strongest fortress fell into the hands of the enemy.

Part of the besieging army now made its way up the west side of the Liaotung peninsula while ca. 50,000 men under Lieutenant General Nodzu continued their march from the Yalu River toward the treaty port Niuchuang.

But at Christmas time they were finally stopped by the entire Chinese army under General Sung. Though these troops were far inferior to the Japanese with regard to equipment and training, Nodzu could not move farther ahead. There were a number of scuffles of varying severity, but the equally large armies largely remained in place opposite each other through all of January and February 1895.

A new theater of operations had to be found and quickly, since it was important for the Japanese government to strike such hard blows that the fruits of an eventual peace agreement would satisfy the Japanese people's arrogance.



The best possible objective for this purpose was the conquest of Wei-hai-wei, and the Japanese minister of war had a third army corps ready for the execution of this daring plan.

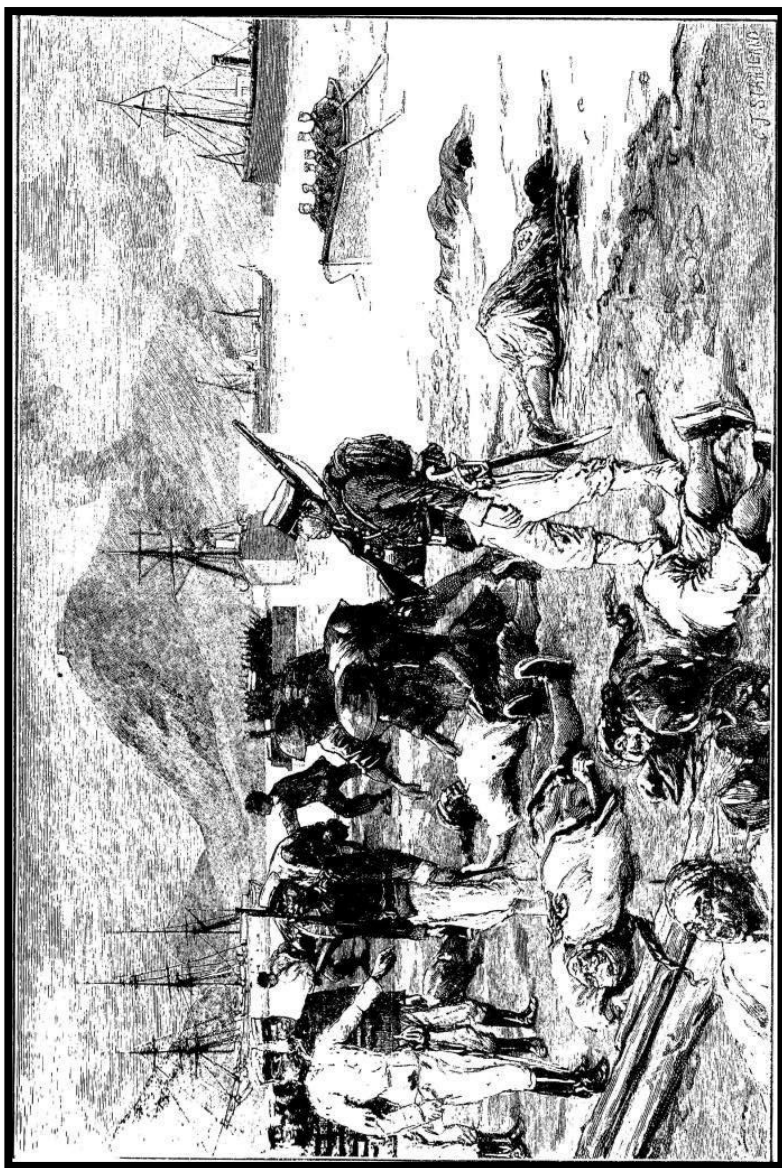
The naval port of Wei-hai-wei lies approximately opposite Port Arthur on the Bay of Pechihli. While Port Arthur with its magnificent wharves and docks was intended as a secure haven for ships needing maintenance and repairs, Wei-hai-wei was the home port for all of Pechihli's fleet.

Strategically the choice could hardly have been better. Together with Port Arthur, Wei-hai-wei could control the entrance to the Bay of Pechihli. It is therefore easy to see why the Japanese wanted possession of the naval base, especially since they assumed that Admiral Ting would participate in defending it. If they could destroy his squadron at the same time, there were prospects for stiffer conditions for peace in Peking, or near there – when the ice broke up.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of January a Japanese army of 30,000 men landed near Yungchêng, ca. 50 kilometers east of Wei-hai-wei, and a fleet of ca. 30 Japanese warships blockaded the naval base from the seaside.

The Japanese had guessed right. Admiral Ting's whole squadron lay at anchor in the harbor, and it was the Chinese navy officers and seamen who met the Japanese with the most desperate resistance.

But the Japanese superiority was too great, and on the 13<sup>th</sup> of February the fortress and Pechihli's fleet were forced to surrender.



The day after the fall of Port Arthur.

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The Chinese government now found it best to initiate negotiations for peace. Even if a couple of the other provinces' fleets and armies were ordered to the rescue, it would have been difficult to prevent the Japanese from landing farther in in the Bay of Pechihli later in the spring. Also, in the last days of January General Nodzu succeeded in forcing General Sung to retreat westward, and Niuchuang was conquered on the 4<sup>th</sup> of March. The Japanese thus were closing in on northern border of China proper.



Marshal Oyama

The conqueror of Port Arthur and Wei-hai-wei.

However, the Japanese government was not especially eager to make peace and constantly found something to object to in the Chinese representatives' credentials, but they finally were so gracious as to state that if the Peking government would send Li Hung-chang himself to Japan, the peace negotiations could begin. *They considered the signature of the great viceroy to be the only guarantee that an eventual peace treaty would be adhered to.*

The Chinese government of course wanted the peace negotiations to take place on Chinese soil and proposed Port Arthur on the reasonable pretext that Li Hung-chang hardly would benefit from a sea voyage all the way to Japan. Although Count Ito may have been agreeable to saving the old viceroy any unnecessary humiliation, he found it necessary for political reasons to hold firm to the demand to meet on Japanese soil. The nation's pride demanded that the greatest son of the vast Chinese empire should be obliged to journey to their country to beg for peace, and after some back and forth telegraphing, Shimonoseki was chosen as the place for the meeting between Li Hung-chang and Count Ito.

The peace delegation departed for Japan on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March, and the first meeting between Japan's prime minister and the Chinese emissary took place 10 days later.

In the historic moment when Asia's greatest statesmen shook each others' hands, more than one of the numerous observers must have thought about the vagaries of fate.

Li and Ito had also met on behalf of their respective nations ten years earlier, but then it was Li Hung-chang who



The Japanese fleet's reconnaissance at Wei-hai-wei 17 August 1894.

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deigned to receive the *Wo-jên's*\* envoy in his vice-royal palace in Tientsin, surrounded by his imperial magnificence and the impressive grandeur that only the rigid Chinese official etiquette can engender.

And now – well now this man, whose word for years on end had been a decisive factor in the lives of 400 million people, a man who ruled in his nominal master's name a larger land area than all the Japanese islands together, came to beg for peace, and the earlier so reviled *Wo-jên* now condescended to hear what the Chinese viceroy might have to tell their representative.

No wonder that the Japanese press overflowed with boastful expressions and smug conceit. *The Japanese nation may never experience a more prideful moment than when Li and Ito met in Shimonoseki.*

The first day was taken up by the question of an armistice. This still had not been agreed when one of these unexpected events that sometimes can be of great moment in the political history of nations intervened.

In all probability the viceroy would never have accepted the harsh terms Count Ito proposed for an armistice, and if so, it is possible that the European powers' itch to meddle in the conflict might have become too strong to resist.

But one of these half-mad political fanatics, of which Japan has so many, became the indirect cause of resolving the problem. He thought he would do his fatherland a service by assassinating the great Chinese statesman.

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\* "Dwarf people" – the usual Chinese term for the Japanese.



Despite the numerous guards and plainclothes policemen, he succeeded in approaching the viceroy's sedan chair and firing a revolver. The bullet failed to find its mark. It hit Li's face, but not with enough power to penetrate the chinbone – and the Japanese nation escaped being called to history's judgment for the despicable sneak murder of a messenger of peace.

All right-thinking Japanese were appalled by the crime – there is no reason to doubt that – and the Japanese government acted as resolute men. It was a brilliant opportunity to play the noble-minded and at the same time ward off European intervention.

As soon as Li Hung-chang regained consciousness, the *mikado's* message of condolences was received along with a statement that *the armistice was granted without conditions*. This great news immediately flew around the world telegraphed by the wire services, and the Europeans greatly admired the Japanese people's magnanimity.

Despite his advanced age, the assassination attempt did not weaken the viceroy's strength for long. Already a week after this unexpected break in the negotiations, Li wished to study Ito's draft for the peace treaty. As was to be expected, the prime minister had screwed the demands up to such height that they could be significantly reduced, for which ample occasion was provided during the following conference sessions.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of April 1895 Li Hung-chang and Ito on behalf of their respective nations signed the peace treaty, the main points of which may be summarized as follows:



A Japanese officer is carried off the battlefield.

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- I. China recognizes Korea's independence.
- II. China relinquishes to Japan:
  - a. That part of Manchuria south of the 41<sup>st</sup> latitude from Yalu to the Liao River – including the treaty port Yinkow (Niuchuang).
  - b. Formosa.
  - c. The Pescadores.
- III. The war reparations are established as 300 million Yen, payable in 7 annual installments with 5% interest. If the whole sum is paid within 3 years, no interest will be due.
- IV. Commercial and other privileges that other nations enjoy as most favored nations, shall also be extended to Japanese citizens.
  - a. Japanese citizens may reside in the cities of Shasih, Chungking, Hangchow, and Soochow.
  - b. Japanese ships shall be allowed to sail on the rivers and canals that lead to Chungking, Hangchow, and Soochow.
  - c. Japanese citizens shall be allowed to establish factories in the treaty ports.
- V. In the new trade treaty, which will be concluded later, China shall acknowledge Japan's customs tariff, and Chinese citizens shall be subject to Japanese jurisdiction, while Japan will keep jurisdiction over its citizens in China.
- VI. Wei-hai-wei will be occupied by Japanese troops at China's expense as surety for the war reparations.

- VII. The Chinese government commits to not punishing prisoners returned by Japan, nor Chinese who may have had connections to the Japanese army during the war. China will return all Japanese prisoners of war.
- VIII. The peace treaty will be ratified in Chefoo three weeks after the treaty is signed.
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## Chapter Two

### From Shimonoseki to Chefoo.

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**L**i Hung-chang returned to Tientsin on the 20<sup>th</sup> of April. As soon as the contents of the treaty became known, the leading men of China got busy sending the most pressing demands to the emperor that the treaty not be ratified. They proposed to continue the war to the bitter end rather than submitting to such an ignominious peace. The old viceroy was called a traitor to the motherland and several of his powerful enemies even demanded that the emperor execute him for high treason. What especially brought these short-sighted patriots blood up to the boiling point was the surrender of the Liaotung peninsula – a part of the Manchu Dynasty's homeland. Li took the uproar with calm indifference. During the most grave crises in China's recent history, he has never paid attention to the public alarms – and it is just this characteristic that has enabled him to become the foremost official of his gigantic homeland.

Most of his own compatriots have never understood his farsighted policies, but have simply regarded his reform plans as treason against China's old traditions. This has been China's misfortune. If he had received loyal support from the empire's other viceroys over the last 20 years, an attack by the much smaller Japanese empire would have been impossible.

Nor were the Japanese especially pleased with the peace treaty. To dictate the peace in Peking had been the driving motive for the people's loyal willingness to sacrifice; the thought had inspired the Japanese poets and writers during the war. To miss the opportunity for a triumphant parade into the Celestial Empire's capital – this was a hard pill to swallow, and the disappointed expectations that found outlet in the press would soon assume even greater dimensions.

During the peace negotiations in Shimonoseki, Li Hung-chang's efforts were mainly directed at getting the war reparations and commercial privileges demanded by Japan reduced, in which he also was successful.

When Nicholas II ascended the throne of Russia in 1894, China had sent an envoy extraordinaire to St. Petersburg to hail the new tsar. A secret treaty between China and Russia was in all probability concluded at the same time providing that the latter state under certain conditions would come to China's assistance in return for permission to construct the Trans-Siberian Railway through northern Manchuria, and Russia's helping hand was not long in coming. It was very important for Russian influence in East Asian affairs to tear Liaotung out of the hands of the conquerors, and France at that time was eager to prove its friendship to its unnatural

ally. A wink from the Russian bear, and the French eagle was immediately willing to go along.

Oddly enough, Germany also joined the interventionist movement. This caused considerable astonishment in uninitiated circles, since the Germans and the Japanese had been very friendly with each other since the 1870s. Thus several hundred young Japanese have been trained in the German army, in German universities, and German factories, and the successful outcome of the war must also to a large extent be attributed to the German officers' energetic efforts as instructors in the Japanese army.

But Germany's former ambassador in Peking, Hr. von Brandt, presumably had managed to convince Kaiser Wilhelm that Germany's commercial interests demanded a Chinese-friendly policy. Japan was almost tapped out as a market for German industry, while China presented brilliant prospects for future expansion, since the Chinese government naturally would give Germany preference in the purchase of warships, cannon, and railroad materials – especially since England locked itself out by refusing to join the intervening powers.

Already on the 23<sup>d</sup> of April, the representatives of these three great powers in Tokyo delivered a note to the Japanese government, which despite its friendly form could not be misunderstood. They wished that Japan would relinquish its demand for a permanent occupation of Liaotung – since the balance of power in East Asia otherwise would be disturbed.

As justification for their "friendly" interposition, the ambassadors among other things referred to the precedent



given by the Congress of Berlin after Russia had concluded a peace treaty with Turkey at San Stefano in 1878. On that occasion, the other great powers had famously made Russia give up almost all the fruits gained by its victory over Turkey.

The ambassadors' note caused great consternation in the Japanese government. The cabinet was immediately called together in Hiroshima to discuss the situation, which was as critical as it possibly could be. On one side stood the people, elated by the nation's victory and already dissatisfied with the original treaty. If the government was to accede to such a drastic change as relinquishing Liaotung, a revolutionary movement could be expected any moment. On the other side stood the three great powers with their "friendly" request, and there was no doubt it was seriously meant. The French, Russian, and German warships in East Asia had already begun to gather.

Marshal Yamagata, who had been appointed war minister on his return from Manchuria, took measures to defend the most important ports in order to be prepared for all eventualities. A fourth army corps that had been organized to continue the war with additional force if the peace negotiations had failed also was ordered to stand ready.

Meanwhile, the ambassadors were awaiting an answer. The debate in the Japanese government was conducted in strict secrecy due to the excited mood of the population. The official press organ *Nichi Nichi Shimbun* was even suspended, just because it had dared report that the *mikado* had called the cabinet together.

Fortunately for the Japanese nation, the emperor was surrounded by patriotic, clear-sighted men who understood what the situation demanded. If Russia had stood alone, the government would no doubt have given a forceful reply, but against three great powers the outcome would be dubious.

After several days the government finally let the ambassadors know that while it denied any right for the powers to meddle in its relations with China, Japan was willing to content itself with that part of Liaotung lying south of the 40<sup>th</sup> latitude – in order to maintain the peace.

Meanwhile, the time limit for ratifying the peace treaty came closer and closer. In Peking there was violent agitation for persuading the emperor to refuse to ratify the treaty and continue the war. Only a few ministers headed by Prince Kung dared to publicly disagree with the general sentiment.

It now became apparent that the Japanese government had been very wise in delaying the peace negotiations until Li Hung-chang was appointed to head the Chinese delegation. Only he could ensure that the treaty be ratified. It is very likely that Kuang Hsü would have given in to the heavy pressure from all quarters if the old statesman had not stood by his side. Li Hung-chang advised him to ratify, and that was enough. Since the young man on the throne had met face to face with his powerful subject, his trust in Li Hung-chang had become unlimited.

The viceroy's secretary, Wu Ting-sang and a high-ranking Manchu named Lun were appointed to meet Japan's plenipotentiary at Chefoo. The Japanese cruiser "*Yaeyama*" arrived in Chefoo in the morning of May 8 with the envoy Mr. Ito

Miyoji onboard. The *mikado* still had not acceded to the three great powers' demand, and the Russian and German warships that lay in the harbor made ready for battle. The whole civilized world expected the storm to break out at any moment, since the time limit for ratification expired at midnight. However, later in the day Wu Ting-sang was advised by telegraph that the American ambassador had succeeded in getting a time extension of 48 hours.

But it turned out the extension was not necessary. At the last moment the Japanese government advised the ambassadors of the great powers that it would agree to their demand to relinquish a permanent occupation of Port Arthur also in return for the amount of war reparations being raised.

The ratification of the revised peace treaty of Shimonoseki took place shortly before midnight, and with that the 1<sup>st</sup> act of the East Asian question was resolved.

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I have mentioned earlier that the violent struggle between the Japanese government and parliament was a major reason why the war broke out already in 1894.

The war became the Ito government's lifesaver. The euphoria of victory silenced all opposition, but when it became known that the government had been forced to give up Liaotung, the struggle resumed. Count Ito tried in vain to gag the press by suspending a number of newspapers. There was always one paper or another that spoke up for the popular

opinion. Thus the editors of the *Yorodzu Choho* wrote a few days after the ratification:

"The government has prohibited newspapers from printing anything connected to certain changes to the original treaty. Suspension often means ruination for some papers. Up to the present 45 papers of various kinds are interdicted for publishing some meagre news about the matter. The uncertainty has caused an extremely strong tension in public opinion. The government is trying everything in its power to extinguish the fire of popular indignation, which is still smoldering. We will see if this succeeds. The government has doubtlessly feared that opinions expressed in the press would make the situation more difficult. Or it has lost the use of its senses from fright. We have still too much trust in the government's peaceful policies to believe that it will attempt a war with the European coalition. However, the people will rather risk their national existence and fight. The demands formulated by Russia are too preposterous. We might say her actions are nothing short of piracy and such injustice as she desires to inflict on us, we must oppose. We are determined to shed our blood to the last drop for this purpose. We have given the government sufficient time for diplomatic negotiations. But if difficulties are avoided by beating a quick retreat when confronted by Russian avarice, then all is lost. Civil war will soon break out – a prospect against which a war with Russia is a bagatelle. Instead of passing the time with diplomatic negotiations let us rather find out what options we have for waging a successful war against Russia, or the three powers combined."

The mood was so inflamed that when the Chinese ambassador, Wang Chih-chün, returned from his visit to St. Petersburg, a couple of Japanese men tried to assassinate him while his ship stopped in Saigon for a day. Fortunately, the ambassador escaped with a revolver bullet in his right arm.

Faced with this strong internal opposition, the government hesitated for a long time. To cover all eventualities, substantial amounts of war materiel was even sent to the troops in Manchuria, but the three great powers did not allow any equivocations; just either war or an expeditious exit from Liaotung. The *mikado* fortunately chose the latter alternative and authorized his representative in Peking, Viscount Hayashi, to negotiate with Li Hung-chang. On the 8<sup>th</sup> of November these gentlemen on behalf of their respective governments signed a new treaty, wherein Japan committed to evacuate Liaotung in return for an indemnity of 45 million dollars.

Thus the matter was decided for the time being.

Most of the Japanese press then attempted a new assault on the Ito government. However, the influential newspaper *Jiji Shimpō* took a more sober view of the situation. The editor referred to earlier interventions after the ends of European wars and did not find it surprising "that Japan has been obliged to give up Liaotung in its own interest and to maintain peace in the Orient. There is now nothing for Japan to do but to remain quiet and only strive to build up a more solid base for the national power through armaments. Then, when sometime in the future a favorable opportunity rises in the Orient, Japan will be able to go where its people wish. We

will not only be able to take revenge on those who have meddled in our affairs, but we will also possess the necessary means to disrupt their plans, if it should become necessary."

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## Chapter Three

### Korea.

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**T**his large peninsula, which stretches toward Japan from northern China, is a little smaller than Norway in area and has about 12 million inhabitants.

Korea is one of the most favored countries in the world by nature, and physically the Koreans on the average surpass their Chinese and Japanese neighbors, but the nation still has for centuries led an anything but enviable existence as a Chinese vassal state.

The Koreans have received their religious and literary culture from China, and through Korea the ideas of Chinese civilization was transmitted to the Japanese islands. In return the Koreans time and again were exposed to the sharp swords of the Japanese sea-rovers.

And what was even worse – from Japan came an aristocratic system of government, which soon undermined the freedom of the masses to benefit a few privileged

families. This is one of the causes for the current condition of the nation. Only noblemen could become officials, and these gentlemen have exercised such a tyranny that the urban middleclass and the peasants have finally given up.

As they say themselves: "Why should we work, when the fruits of our work are denied us?"

The Koreans generally are lazy and apathetic. From time to time they have arisen against their officials, but only to be saddled with even greater burdens.

The uprising that led to the Chinese intervention in 1894 also was due to the aristocracy's extortions.

The proclamation that the movement's leader issued was quite descriptive of conditions on the peninsula. It read as follows:

"Society depends on family bonds; the relationship of the governing to the governed. The master should be good to his servants, and the servants loyal to their master. If our homes and our government were based on these principles, we would have been happy. Our present king is good, caring, and gracious. The great God is witness to his righteousness. If honest and competent ministers had served at his side, we would have been as happy as our ancestors under Mun and Kei's dynasty.

We cannot understand the present ministers' behavior; they are not only careless in carrying out their duties, but steal from the state treasury. Thus they conceal the king's wisdom from us and our prayers do not reach his throne. If we turn to him in our misery, they answer us that we are deprived, ignorant, and dishonest and our petitions are returned to us.



There is not a single faithful official near the throne, and the ministers – well, they are themselves the most ignorant.

As a consequence of all this the people are revolting, and the upheaval grows day by day. It is difficult for us to exist and we are every day subject to tyrannical acts.

The cries for vengeance are heard from all sides. There is no honesty or good faith between master and servant any more. Relations between the governing and the governed are not as they should be. Misery is everywhere. Life is not worth living.

*Kvan Sa* teaches that when discord is widespread between the members of a society, the country must go to ruin. Now it is even worse than in the old days. The ministers are not concerned about the dangers facing the country; they only have thoughts for themselves to become rich and fat. The examination system has been made a source of money-making, and public offices are for sale on the market. Instead of filling the royal treasury, they fill their own.

The result is that we have an enormous state debt and there is little thought given to get it reduced. Eight provinces have been robbed of all its meat and fish; the people there are destitute. Avarice and all kinds of debauchery surround us, and that is the reason why the people live in misery and poverty. The people are gradually dying out. Soon no one will be left.

We are only farmers and unschooled folk, but we cannot just sit still and watch our dangerous situation with equanimity. Thousands and thousands have consulted

together. The people of the eight provinces are all of the same opinion.

We have sworn together to stand as patriots, and we have sworn to sacrifice our lives and property to aid His Majesty, the King, in furthering the welfare of his people.

Though the circumstances in these times can bring disaster to us, we ask that all you others stay with your peaceful occupations. We have no quarrels with you. For your sake we fight and die.

May you live long and prosper! Long live the King!"

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History often repeats itself.

I have earlier mentioned that the Japanese 300 years ago ventured on another campaign of conquest in Korea without being able to establish themselves permanently in the country. What happened then has essentially repeated itself now.

However, when the wild horde of marauders returned across the sea in 1598, they brought something back with them from the devastated country. Besides the thousands of Korean ears, the islanders also brought back many shiploads of examples of Korea's high culture with respect to the arts and industry. These treasures, which were distributed among the islands of the returning soldiers, have had a significant influence in the great developments in the Japanese art industry that took place after that time.

The Japanese have again been obliged to withdraw from the peninsula.

When the Japanese had conquered all of Korea in the fall of 1894, I wrote in a couple of major European newspapers that I, from my knowledge of East Asia's history, was confident that the Japanese despite their victories would again be driven off the mainland and referred to earlier failed attempts to occupy the peninsula and especially the Russian policy in East Asia.

However, at that time most Europeans was under the impression that the Chinese empire stood on the edge of the abyss and that Japan at least must get Korea and a part of southern China for its troubles while Russia took Manchuria and northern China. Against this sort of armchair expertise my efforts were of course in vain. One of the editors even attached a "tail" to my article stating "that despite my knowledge of East Asia's history and politics, he presumed that my sympathy for the Chinese had clouded my judgment of the present conditions in East Asia."

— — But history has repeated itself. — —

In return for the great sacrifices of blood and treasure for the war, the Japanese have not even gained as much as they did 300 years ago. There was not much booty to bring back to the islands since Korea is a poor country now.

The positive winnings for the Japanese consist primarily of useful experiences in diverse respects – experiences that they will surely know to make use of in future political tangles in East Asia.

The Treaty of Shimonoseki required China to acknowledge Korea's independence, but it was surely not with an especially heavy heart that the emperor gave up his suzerainty on the peninsula.

For China has not acquired a number of vassal states for the same reason that the Europeans have established colonies.

No, the net return derived from Turkestan, Tibet, Nepal, Mongolia, Manchuria, and Korea has probably been a significant debit.

These countries have primarily been brought in under the emperor's overlordship as buffer states. As such Korea has served well, and it will continue to serve the same function now as an independent kingdom.

However, after the peace treaty was concluded, the Japanese have taken the view of the situation that Korea is indeed independent, but Japan must provisionally take over its administration until the Koreans learn to stand on their own feet – sometime in a quite distant future.

Unfortunately, this view was not in tune with Russian and Chinese interests.

Without a doubt the Japanese intended to wake up the peninsula to a new life, develop its rich natural resources, and indirectly get back their investment in money and human lives. I also believe that the Japanese could have done this. It is a nation with an energetic and enterprising spirit that is hardly exceeded by many – but this potential was undermined by the past. The seeds of hate and bitterness sown by the islanders 300 years ago have borne much too rich a harvest.

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The Japanese began their efforts at reform already before the treaty was signed. King Li Hui, who had been held as a kind of prisoner during the war, was set free and surrounded by Japanese-friendly state councilors. Japanese officials were appointed to run all the branches of the administration, and the Japanese ambassador, Count Inouye, became Korea's actual ruler.

But the reformers went to work too quickly. Traditions, customs, and the whole government machinery were to be "Japanized" in a rush. This naturally did not agree with the conservative Koreans, who despite their wretchedness are far from lacking in national pride. Their highly gifted queen, who had always been opposed to all foreign influence, soon gathered a substantial party around her person. Since the Russian ambassador's wife, Mrs. Waeber, was her close friend, it is probable that she had hopes of support for her anti-Japanese stance.

The resentment against the reforms imposed from outside also grew among the general public, since a horde of corrupt office seekers who thought they could treat the people as they pleased streamed over from Japan. These hungry jackals destroyed all that Count Inouye and the more respectable Japanese officials built up.

Despairing over all the resistance he met from all sides, Count Inouye sailed back to Japan in June 1895 to confer with the government about ways to maintain Japanese authority on the peninsula.



**Li Hui**  
King of Korea, born 1851.

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That the count did not underestimate his bitterest opponent, the queen, is apparent from the following statement published in The Japan Mail:

"At present Her Majesty is the most intelligent person in Korea. She is very active in politics, but that is just a natural consequence of her superior faculties. The queen has extensive knowledge of classic and current literature. Her appearance at official occasions is quite captivating. She has a special gift for winning people over to her views. I cannot other than admire her personal talents, though she takes an absolutely hostile attitude to us."

This testimony is astonishing coming from a Japanese, but it only confirms the impression all Europeans who have met her have of this noble lady.

While Count Inouye was absent, the queen's party thought that the time had come to overthrow the Japanese regime in Korea. The prime minister imposed by the Japanese, Pak Yong-hyo, apparently had conceived a plan to depose the king and queen, and they sought to forestall him.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of July the whole cabinet, except Mr. Pak, was called to the palace, where the queen's principal friends had gathered.

Here the king announced that he had dismissed the prime minister and ordered his arrest for high treason. Fortunately for the conspirator, he had been warned in time and had escaped, since Count Inouye's deputy did not dare call on the Japanese garrison to rescue him due to the hostile attitude of the capital's population.



The next day 16 of the highest government offices were filled with the queen's adherents, and the royal couple was for the moment free of the Japanese guardianship. About a half hundred Japanese were appointed as advisers in the various departments. These were allowed to keep their positions so as to not inflame the mood in Japan more than necessary.

The government in Tokyo was obliged to give approval to what had happened – for the time being – since the great powers were pressing it for the evacuation of Liaotung, and Count Ito did not think it opportune to call their attention to the Korean question by using military force against a country that was supposed to be independent according to the Treaty of Shimonoseki.

However, Inouye immediately returned to Seoul to retake the lost territory. Since Prime Minister Pak Yong-hyo had failed so miserably for the Japanese, some other way must be found – even if it diverted a little from the laws of morality.

Another Japanese also came to Korea with Count Inouye. This was a retired general, Viscount Miura.

This gentleman had lived quietly for several years with no connection to politics and had only occupied himself studying old Buddhist texts.

It therefore caused considerable astonishment when Count Ito returned to Japan after a month's stay in Korea, leaving the Japanese interests in the hands of General Miura.

However, the newly minted diplomat had a strong qualification for his important post. He possessed the spirit of the island empire's old warrior caste, which can be expressed as: "All is permitted that may benefit the motherland."

The Japanese government probably thought this kind of Jesuitical credo might come in useful in Korea, and Miura would soon show he worth their trust – but in a more violent way than the government had intended.

He immediately realized that the queen was an unyielding obstacle to recovering Japan's diminishing influence on the peninsula. She had to fall – and death was the only permanent solution, since only death makes a rebirth impossible after the fall – thus the *mikado's* representative reasoned and acted accordingly.

And he had to act quickly, since the natives were driving out the small Japanese garrisons around the country and the king was considering a plan to abolish his *kurentai*.\*

Miura at once made contact with the queen's enemies among the Koreans themselves. They were led by none other than the king's father, the elderly Tai Wen Kun, who has played such a large role in Korean politics all the way back to when he was regent during his son's minority. He was not at all opposed to destroying his daughter-in-law's power with the help of the Japanese. Of course, the old gentleman did not dream of that this was to be accomplished by violence on her person.

It is apparent from the later court documents that Miura called together several of the more unsavory Japanese characters in Seoul and informed them of his plan to murder the queen. These scoundrels were immediately willing to take on this abominable task.

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\* Korean soldiers drilled by Japanese officers.

Miura had to be more careful with the commandant of the Japanese garrison in Seoul. He said Tai Wen Kun had developed a plan to bring down the queen's party and the ambassador had been asked for assistance, which he had promised, since he considered that a government led by Tai Wen Kun was synonymous with a resumption of the reform effort and restoration of Japanese prestige in Korea.

Miura then gave orders to surround the palace and prevent any Koreans, whether men or women, from leaving the palace in the evening of October 8; the date set for execution of the plan.

In order to discourage the people in the capital from interfering in any eventual fighting, the following two proclamations were posted in public places.

The first proclamation read as follows:

"At present the national power is endangered and the hearts of the people dissolve through the presence in the Palace of a crowd of base fellows. The abuses of the past are being revived. The laws are in disorder and the dignity of His Majesty is violated. The government stands in imminent danger and the people are in distress like unto a furnace fire. So the National Grand Duke is returned to power to inaugurate changes, expel the base fellows, restore former laws, and vindicate the dignity of His Majesty. He returns to power to insure national peace, and to quiet the alarm of the people. This is all; so this proclamation is published. Therefore all are exhorted to follow their ordinary vocations and feel no alarm.

*Signed* — Committee on National Independence."



Tai Wen Kun

The king of Korea's father. Born 1811.

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The second proclamation read:

"Nowadays low fellows interfere with the royal glory, drive away men of integrity, substituting inferiority, so that that which would benefit the nation fails on the path to accomplishment. A nation of 500 years is run into danger in a single morning. I was born of the Royal Family and cannot bear the sight of such doings. I have now entered the Palace to aid His Majesty, expel the low fellows, perfect that which will be a benefit, save the country and introduce peace. Everyone should attend to their usual affairs and feel no alarm. Those who now interfere with me will have cause to repent of it.

*Signed — National Grand Duke (Prince-Parent.)"*

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All went according to Miura's plan. At dusk about thirty of the ambassador's henchmen went to the palace, which already was surrounded by a couple of battalions of the *kurentai* and Japanese soldiers. They at once rushed into the royal apartments with drawn sabers. The queen's nephew, Colonel Hong, was cut down by their leader when he tried to prevent the gang from entering Her Majesty's rooms.

The court chamberlain was wounded, but managed to escape into the king's apartment. However, even here there was no sanctuary to be found. The unfortunate monarch had to watch his chamberlain being murdered without daring to move a finger. If a couple of foreigners had not happened to be present, the king would also very likely have been killed.

Meanwhile, the bandits had searched through room after room until they found the right one, where the queen and her ladies in waiting had sought refuge when they heard the alarum.

Since the murders did not know what the queen looked like, they killed several of the ladies just to make sure they got her. Their leader had a photograph of Her Majesty in his pocket, and that was now taken out and the queen was identified as one of the murdered ladies.

They then wrapped a silk cloth around her body and carried it out into the palace garden under some trees, poured kerosene over the corpse and set it alight; soon there was only some burned bones left of Korea's unfortunate queen.

A more disgraceful murder can hardly be found in the annals of world history.

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King Li Hui, who still did not know anything about his spouse's horrible fate, meanwhile sent a messenger to Miura, demanding an explanation. The ambassador came, accompanied by Tai Wen Kun, and presented His Majesty with a list of the Koreans who were to form a new Japanese-friendly cabinet. There was nothing for it but to bow to superior force and the list was signed.

In the first few days, the Europeans and the king were both uncertain as to whether the queen had found a safe refuge as she had during a similar incident in 1882.

In order to dampen the outrage when the crime became known to the people and at the same time try to hoodwink the

foreigners, the following proclamation was issued in the name of the king:

EDICT

It is now thirty-two years since we ascended the Throne, but Our ruling influence has not yet extended wide. The Queen Min introduced her relatives to the Court and placed them about Our person, whereby she made dull Our sense, exposed the people to extortion, put Our government in disorder, selling offices and titles. Hence tyranny prevailed all over the country and robbers arose in all quarters. Under these circumstances the foundation of Our dynasty was in imminent peril We knew the extreme other wickedness, but could not dismiss and punish her because of helplessness and fear of her party.

We desire to stop and suppress her influence. In the Twelfth Moon of last year We took an oath at Our Ancestral Shrine that the Queen, and her relatives and Ours should never again be allowed to interfere in State affairs. We hoped this would lead the Min faction to mend their ways. But the Queen did not give up her wickedness, but with her party aided a crowd of low fellows to rise up about us, and so managed as to prevent the Ministers of State from consulting us. Moreover, they have forged Our signature to a decree to disband our loyal soldiers thereby instigating and raising a disturbance, and when it occurred she escaped as in the Im O year. We have endeavored to discover her whereabouts, hut as she does not come forth and appear, we are convinced that she is not only unfitted and unworthy of the Queen's rank, but also that her guilt is excessive and brim full. Therefore with her We may not succeed to the glory of the Royal Ancestry. So we hereby depose her from the rank of Queen and reduce her to the level of the lowest class!

Signed by [the new cabinet ministers].



Miura had first tried to force the king to sign the edict, but this grave insult was more than the king could bear. He wrathfully threw the paper on the floor and declared he would rather have his hand cut off than affix his signature to such an edict. The Japanese dictator thus had to be content with the signatures of the cabinet ministers.

The proclamation was telegraphed out into the world and a copy was presented to the foreign legations in Seoul. They were gathered for a meeting in which Viscount Miura also participated. He received his own proclamation with a sorrowful mien and expressed his deepest sympathy for the king.

However, the United States' consul general, Dr. Allen, who already was informed about the case, quickly replied while he looked sharply at Miura: "This edict is not issued of the king's free will!"

The other ministers present agreed and reported the true circumstances to their respective governments.

But the comedy was not over yet. A couple of days later another proclamation was issued to the Korean people wherein the king informed them that out of consideration for the crown prince and as a reward for his devotion to his father, he had "raised" Her Majesty to the rank of Concubine, 1<sup>st</sup> Class! And to check the disquiet among the queen's partisans yet another proclamation was issued as follows:

"We regard all our loyal subjects with equal favor and without prejudice. Neither awards nor punishments shall be influenced by party interests. We therefore request our subjects to forget private disputes and out of regard for the

country's difficult position unite their efforts with Ours to further the reform effort."

However, the queen of Korea's frightful death could not be kept secret for long. The king almost lost his mind from grief. The foreign consuls and missionaries alternated to keep him company, since he did not tolerate anyone other than the crown prince and foreigners. So as not to be poisoned, he had a Mrs. Underwood prepare all his food, which was sent to the palace every day in a locked chest.

As soon as Viscount Miura's role in the murder no longer could be denied, the Japanese government sent the vice-minister for foreign affairs, Mr. Komura, and the attorney general [?], Mr. Ando, over to Korea. Miura and the entire Japanese legation plus the commandant of the garrison were arrested and then deported to Japan on the 21<sup>st</sup> of October.

Count Inouye then returned to his old post. This gentleman was oddly enough always absent when something was about to happen. — — —

Viscount Miura and his henchmen were immediately tried before a court-martial. It looked like the Japanese government really wanted to show the world that it was not an accessory to the crime.

The more respectable part of the nation surely has also felt disgust for this cowardly political murder. The influential newspaper *Nichi Nichi* stated:

"In the first place, the ambassador and his subordinates must be severely punished because they have acted directly against the government's instructions and on their own recognizance without getting instructions from the foreign

minister. In the second place, the whole government must be brought to answer for having recommended that the emperor appoint such an incompetent diplomat as former General Miura to such an extremely important post."

Another paper stated that "Miura had only one thing to do, and that was to commit suicide to spare the government further embarrassment."

During the court proceedings, it was fully explained how the murder was planned and executed, but the officers and the subordinate embassy employees were still found not guilty because they had only followed orders.

And Miura – well, he too was exonerated – for lack of proof that he was directly guilty of the murder and in consideration of the patriotic spirit that had led to his actions.

The whole show proved to be a farce, or rather a tragedy, from beginning to end. The Japanese government should at least have punished the former general for having carried out his mission in such a hamfisted manner. It might have saved a little of its reputation in the eyes of the world.

To be sure the Japanese nation later expressed its disapproval of this cabinet, whose obedient servant Miura was, but it must still cause some heartburn in Japanese-friendly circles that the criminal went free as a bird.

Miura is, as I have previously mentioned, a well-known researcher of old Buddhist literature.

His studies of the Indian prophet's gentle humanist creed do not appear to have borne the right fruits.

Hopefully, Miura will, on his return to his study, come to realize that Nirvana has no place for men who plot the murder of queens to whose court they are accredited.

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For a while the queen's death seemed to strengthen Japan's position on the peninsula. Count Inouye was Korea's real ruler again and issued one reformist decree after the other in the name of the king.

Even the mode of dress and hair style did not escape the Japanese authorities' fanatical reform urge.

The Koreans have for centuries carried their hair rolled up in a large knot on the middle of the head. The hair knot is as dear to them as the pigtail for the Chinese – or as the wig was for our ancestors.

After the social revolution in Japan, most of the islanders have cut their hair in the European fashion. Since the Koreans now were to be Japanized, they must of course lose their hair knots.

The king and the crown prince were the first victims. A Japanese barber was assigned to carry out the haircut. Tai Wen Kun and several prominent Koreans voluntarily abandoned the hair knot.

Like Peter the Great in the old days, Inouye posted barbers around on the street corners with orders to cut the hair of any Koreans who still had not obeyed the haircut decree and Japanese soldiers were sent out into the countryside to enforce compliance.

Obviously, this mode of proceeding increased the Koreans' resentment against their self-appointed masters.

In order to heap even more scorn on the powerless monarch and make him look ridiculous in the eyes of the world, a proclamation was issued in early November 1895, wherein the king was made to state that he would assume the title of emperor! The Japanese also sent telegrams to Europe and America with this message. The throne room in the palace was even made ready for the necessary ceremonies. Fortunately, the king was saved from this tomfoolery by the foreign ambassadors intervening.

But even the most uncomplaining creature can be provoked beyond its patience, and there were soon signs that the Korean people had run out of tolerance.

Reports came from all parts of the country of resistance against the oppressors. The Japanese had trouble maintaining their authority even in Seoul. On the 28<sup>th</sup> of November and again on the 30<sup>th</sup> of December the people tried to storm the palace and free the king. They did not succeed – but clearly a crisis was near.

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St. Petersburg had long been dissatisfied with its representative in Seoul, Mr. Waeber. This gentleman was a very careful, correct bureaucrat, who never has shared the appetite for intrigue of his talented wife – the murdered queen's intimate friend.

Mr. Waeber has been very passive during the complications in Korea of recent years – so passive that the Russian foreign minister found it best to transfer this diplomatic Fabius to Mexico, where Mr. Waeber's temperament might be

a better fit than in East Asia's hotspot. His successor, Mr. Speyer, had even arrived in Seoul, but then something happened that saved Mrs. Waeber's spouse from the Mexican exile and made him more deserving of the tsar's gratitude than many of Russia's most active diplomats.

What arts of persuasion the little Mrs. Waeber may have used to convince the perplexed monarch to take a step that could have cost him his certainly not very happy life – about that history is silent, but the fact is that the king finally decided to flee from his persecutors and seek refuge – in the Russian embassy.

The time to act was chosen when most of the Japanese garrison was absent to suppress the resistance in the provinces and large masses of Korean patriots had gathered near the capital. All preparations were made as carefully as possible. A courier was sent down to Chemulpo, where the Russian warship "*Admiral Korniloff*" lay at anchor, and on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 1896 100 navy sailors came up to Seoul – to protect the Russian legation.

The court ladies had spent a lot of time in the week before making excursions into the city's vicinity. Numerous sedan chairs carrying the ladies constantly passed in and out of the palace gates without waking suspicion among the watchful Japanese – which was exactly what was intended.

The king used to work until late in the night and go to bed at dawn and so decided to disappear early in the morning when his ministers would assume him safely asleep in the arms of Morpheus.

His Majesty and the crown prince were seated in enclosed sedan chairs and left the palace without attracting the least attention. Around 40 faithful friends and servants joined them outside the gates.

The cortège arrived safely at the Russian embassy at 7 o'clock in the morning and knocked on the gate, and naturally such eminent guests were welcomed with the warmest hospitality by Mr. and Mrs. Waeber – who of course had no idea of what it all was about.

No wonder the king was pale and shaken when he entered the embassy's reception hall; his morning excursion had been a daring gamble for his life and crown.

And, when the gate to the Russian embassy closed behind him, the Japanese ascendancy in Korea was broken.

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As soon as the king had been installed in his new rooms in the embassy, he called to him his earlier prime minister, Pak Chung-yang, and dictated the following two proclamations, which were plastered up on all the street corners:

#### ROYAL PROCLAMATION

Alas! Alas! On account of Our unworthiness and maladministration the wicked advanced and the wise retired. Of the last ten years, none has passed without troubles. Some were brought on by those We had trusted as the members of the body, while others, by those of Our own bone and flesh. Our dynasty of five centuries has thereby often been endangered, and millions of Our subjects have thereby been gradually impoverished. These facts make Us blush and sweat for shame.

But these troubles have been brought about through Our partiality and selfwill, giving rise to rascality and blunders leading to calamities. All have been Our own fault from the first to the last.

Fortunately through loyal and faithful subjects rising up in righteous efforts to remove the wicked, there is a hope that the tribulations experienced may invigorate the State, and that calm may return after the storm. This accords with the principle that human nature will have freedom after a long pressure, and that the ways of Heaven bring success after reverses. We shall endeavour to be merciful. No pardon, however, shall be extended to the principal traitors concerned in the affairs of July, 1894, and of October, 1895. Capital punishment should be their due, thus venting the indignation of men and gods alike. But to all the rest, officials or soldiers, citizens or coolies, a general amnesty, free and full, is granted, irrespective of the degree of their offences. Reform your hearts; ease your minds; go about your business, public or private, as in times past.

As to the cutting of the top-knots — what can We say? Is it such an urgent matter? The traitors, by using force and coercion, brought about the affair. That this measure was taken against Our will is, no doubt, well known to all. Nor is it Our wish that the conservative subjects throughout the country, moved to righteous indignation, should rise up, as they have, circulating false rumours, causing death and injury to one another, until the regular troops had to be sent to repress the disturbances by force. The traitors indulged their poisonous nature in everything. Fingers and hairs would fail to count their victims. The soldiers are Our children. So are the insurgents. Cut any of the ten fingers, and one would cause as much pain as another. Fighting long continued would pour out



blood and heap up corpses, hindering communications and traffic.

Alas! If this continues the people will all die. The mere contemplation of such consequences provokes Our tears and chills Our heart. We desire that as soon as these Our commands arrive the soldiers should return to Seoul and the insurgents to their respective places and occupations.

As to the cutting of top-knots, no one shall be forced. As to dress and hats, do as you please. The evils now afflicting the people shall be duly attended to by the Government. This is Our own word of honour. Let all understand.

By Order of His Majesty,  
PAK CHUNG YANG,  
Acting Home Minister and Prime Minister.  
11<sup>th</sup> day, 2<sup>nd</sup> moon, 1<sup>st</sup> year of Kon Yang.

#### PROCLAMATION TO THE SOLDIERS

On account of the unhappy fate of Our country, traitors have made trouble every year. Now We have a document informing us of another conspiracy. We have therefore come to the Russian Legation. The Representatives of different countries have all assembled.

Soldiers! Come and protect us. You are Our children. The troubles of the past were due to the crimes of chief traitors. You are all pardoned, and shall not be held answerable. Do your duty and be at ease. When you meet the chief traitors, viz. Cho-hui Yen, Wu-pom Sun, Yi-tu Hwong, Yi-pom Nai, Yi-chin Ho, and Kon-yong Chin, cut off their heads at once, and bring them.

You [soldiers] attend us at the Russian Legation.

11<sup>th</sup> day, 2<sup>nd</sup> moon, 1<sup>st</sup> year of Kon-yang.  
Royal Sign.



Li Chok.  
Crown prince of Korea.

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The reports that the king had escaped to the Russian legation ran like a wildfire across the capital city and caused great joy for most of the population mixed with worry that this *coup d'état* would lead to a decisive war between Japan and Russia. The foreign representatives immediately paid their official visits.

Even the Japanese ambassador attended the audience and we may well imagine with what feelings they saw each other again. The telegraph wire to Fusan had been cut and thus the ambassador had not been able to communicate with the government in Tokyo. He therefore had to assume a very humble bearing while conversing with his erstwhile prisoner. The news of what had happened did not reach Japan until 5 days later.

The king's proclamations were well received by the people in the city and were immediately obeyed. Even the palace guard and police force, which had been organized by the Japanese, came running in double-time to the Russian embassy and were told to block off the surrounding streets, since the king feared that the Japanese garrison might attempt to storm the embassy building.

The Japanese ambassador fortunately was wise enough not to make such an attempt, since then the outraged Koreans would hardly have let a single Japanese get away from the peninsula alive.

The king gave the chief of police orders to arrest the most hated of the state councilors appointed by the Japanese. This was done, but on the way to the prison the squad escorting the prisoners came by the Japanese military barracks. When the

soldiers saw their special friend, the minister of war, they immediately attacked the police escort and carried the minister off to the Japanese embassy.

This enraged the mob and they attacked the other ministers and killed them on the spot. A Japanese laborer, who ventured too close to the scene of the crime, also had to pay with his life for his curiosity.

These three individuals were the only victims of this revolution, which finally brought peace to the Korean nation. But for how long?

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To free the oppressed Korean people from "the Chinese yoke" and reform the government – this was Japan's official reason for starting the war with China.

We have now seen how they carried out their program.

History repeated itself. The warlike islanders have been obliged to leave the Asian mainland just like 300 years ago. Not let us see if "the tribulations experienced may invigorate the State, and that calm may return after the storm," as the king expressed it in his proclamation.

As far as I can tell from the Korean and other East Asian newspapers, the beginning looks promising.

When the king fled to the Russian embassy, most of the uninitiated believed that this action was synonymous with establishing a new Russian protectorate on the peninsula, and there even was an interpellation in the British parliament about this. However, as I have mentioned earlier, it is best for

both Russian and Chinese interests that Korea remains independent.

Neither Russia nor China has put forth any demand for a protectorate since the 11<sup>th</sup> of February 1896. The former Chinese inspector general for the customs department in the Korean treaty ports, Dr. McLeavy Brown, has been appointed councilor to the king – but that is according to His Majesty's own wishes, and Mr. Waeber only directs such reforms as can strengthen the country's regained independence.

Under the guidance of these two gentlemen there have been great changes in the domestic government. The peninsula has been divided into a more practical arrangement of 13 provinces. The mail system has been re-organized. The governors and other officials have regular salaries, and a number of unnecessary functionaries both at the court and in government offices have been dismissed. Several competent foreigners have been hired for the judiciary, war, and labor departments. The king has left the Russian embassy and established his residence in a newly constructed palace, and everything points to Korea facing a new and happier future.

It is very probable that Russia will build the Trans-Siberian Railway down to one of Korea's ice-free harbors, but this will be to Korea's advantage. It will only bring more life and enterprise to this land blessed by so many natural resources.

It is difficult to say what the Japanese will do in the future. They are arming as fast they can. The Korean question still may not have been quite put to rest.

## Chapter Four

### The Formosa Campaign.

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**T**aiwan, or Formosa, separated from the Chinese mainland by a ca. 200 kilometer wide strait, is one of Asia's largest islands.

Taiwan was described in Chinese books already in the seventh century, but Spanish and Portuguese buccaneers were the first to settle on the island\* and gave it the name Formosa – the beautiful – due to its magnificent natural beauty.

In 1624 the Dutch arrived and drove off the buccaneers. They established a colony with several forts to defend the island against their rivals, and the ruins of "Fort Zeelandia" can still be seen near the southern capital city Tainan-fu.

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\* Except for the aborigines, whose ancestors arrived on the island around 3 to 4000 B.C.

When the Ming Dynasty was overthrown by the Manchus in 1644, many Chinese fled to Formosa and under their leader Coxinga drove the Dutch off the island. Coxinga's successor later surrendered Formosa to Emperor Kang Hi, and since then the Chinese have ruled the island.

The aborigine population belongs to the Malayan race. Some have blended into the Chinese population, but most still live in half-wild conditions in the mountainous regions of Formosa's eastern half.

In the 1880s the famously progressive Chinese official Liu Ming-chuan was governor on the island. Here he had a large enough domain for his restless energy, since Formosa is one of the world's most blessed lands, but Liu went ahead much too fast. He hired a whole staff of European officers, engineers, and geologists and tried to miraculously introduce all of the West's inventions at once. These projects cost many millions of dollars, and the people complained several times to Peking about the high taxes. He was finally recalled in 1891 and his successor has had his hands full bringing order into the island's finances.

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The news about Formosa being surrendered to Japan caused great outrage in southern China, especially in the Fukien province, which for many years had been united with the island under one viceroy. Most of the Chinese families on Formosa also came from Fukien and have always maintained close ties with their old homeland.



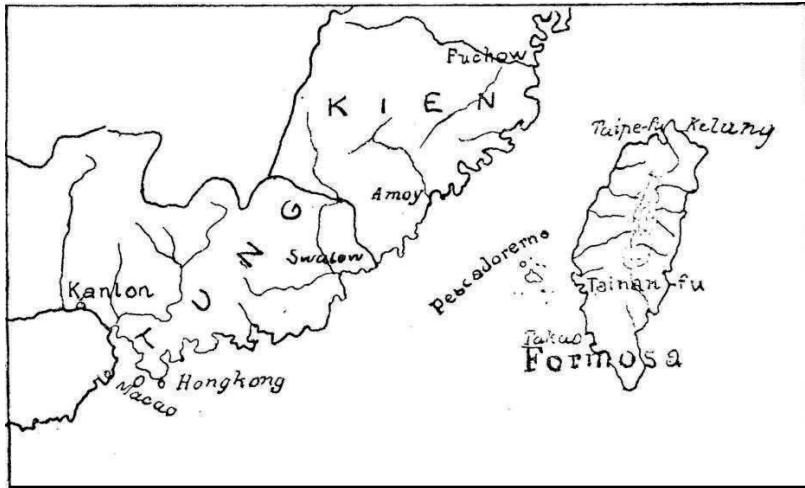
Petition after petition was sent up to Peking, and several wealthy merchants even offered to buy back the island, but the Japanese, reasonably enough, did not want to let go of this precious booty that they had lusted after for so long.

Formosa then decided to help itself, since the emperor could not help them. When the war began, the famous Liu Yung-fu was sent over to the island to organize its defenses. This man's name is not well known in Europe, though many have heard about the "Black Flag Army." It was as commandant of this well-organized Chinese military force that Liu Yung-fu won his fame in the Tongking War, and thousands of French mothers got reason to mourn their sons who were sent out to this inhospitable country to fight against Liu's soldiers.

When peace was concluded in 1885, the "Black Flag Army" was broken up, and those who did not choose to stay in Tongking and help its people in their endless fight against the French, followed their leader to Canton, where they found employment in the provincial army. When the emperor ordered Liu Yung-fu to go to Formosa, several hundreds of his old soldiers followed along to the island, and with their help he got Formosa's defenses built up into a quite respectable condition.

The island was supposed to be handed over to the Japanese a couple of months after the Treaty of Shimonoseki, but a large part of the Chinese colonists on Formosa had no wish to be treated as cattle for sale, and since they knew that they could count on Liu Yung-fu and support from their friends on the mainland, they decided to steal a march on the

conquerors, and on the 20<sup>th</sup> of May 1895 the Chinese governor Tang Chin-sung was forced to declare Formosa independent and himself president of the new republic.



Map of Formosa

If Tang had been enthusiastic for the cause or had possessed any of the characteristics of a dynasty founder, Formosa might possibly have come out of the fight with the Japanese as an independent state under the protection of China or the European powers, since most of the port cities had been furnished with modern defense works under the previous Chinese governor, Liu Ming-chuan.

When the French tried to occupy Formosa in 1884 during the Tongking War, they soon found that these fortifications were no child's play. Admiral Courbet's attempt at landing by the northern capital Taipeh-fu resulted in a crushing defeat.

The Chinese lay behind the German designed ramparts and shot the French landing craft to pieces with Krupp cannons.

Since then Formosa's defenses have been significantly improved, and Tang could perhaps have brought 60,000 men into the field against the invaders if he had immediately called on Liu Yung-fu and made the necessary money available for the general's disposition. The government in Peking certainly had not done anything to stop him. Quite to the contrary; as in Tongking, the people on Formosa could count on unofficial support.

But Tang Chin-sung was only a run of the mill bureaucrat, sent to Formosa to run its administration in peacetime. He had no close relationship with the inhabitants and in no way felt himself obliged to act as Formosa's savior. If it went wrong, he could expect to be executed as a traitor, and this dry and cautious officeholder was not one to take risks. By complying to the letter with his emperor's orders to relinquish the island the Peking government would find it difficult to blame him for anything and he would retain his position in the government hierarchy.

His one thought was to get away from this dangerous situation as quickly as possible. Therefore no preparations were made to organize the defense of his residential city, Taipeh-fu, or the neighboring city of Kelung.

The Japanese were well informed about this by the Chinese themselves, since there were several wealthy merchants in northern Formosa who eagerly anticipated the Japanese takeover. Their only care was that their business interests should not suffer from a lengthy war.

A man named Lin Wei-yuan was especially singled out and accused of having sent the Japanese information about the situation. For the Europeans who have such knowledge of the Chinese empire's financial world that they would place confidence in the telegraphic report from the Reuters agent when the Sino-Japanese broke out: "The Peking government has tried to raise a loan of one million dollars, but with no luck" – for them Lin Wei-yuan was just a name.

But in East Asia's commercial world he is better known. Lin Wei-yuan is one of a not inconsiderable number of wealthy Chinese who can write his millions with three digits. He is a descendant of one of Coxinga's most renowned generals. When the Dutch were driven out of Formosa, Coxinga divided the island between his top generals. Lin's ancestor got a large part and this landed estate has remained in the family right up to the present.

This wealthy landowner and merchant has in later years exhibited a generosity that can only be compared to that of the late Baron von Hirsch. Among other things he has contributed ca. 6 million dollars of his own funds to the defenses of Fukien and Formosa. Lin has received several honors from his emperor for this, but these honors he was allowed to renounce when the Treaty of Shimonoseki was promulgated so that he could become a Japanese subject if that should be in his interest.

The island's patriots had hoped that Lin Wei-yuan would join the independence movement and give them financial and moral support. Instead they heard that he had offered the Japanese government to become a Japanese subject and pay 3

million dollars to keep his properties on Formosa. This proposal apparently was not accepted, but the wealthy merchant's practical, though not very patriotic attitude, gave the resistance movement against the Japanese a severe setback on northern Formosa.

On the 3<sup>d</sup> of June a Japanese squadron ran in to Kelung, which was defended by a number of forts manned by ca. 10,000 men, but President Tang had probably taken care that the resistance would not be stronger than absolutely necessary. There was no one in overall command, and after a couple of hours' bombardment the Japanese could set ca. 4,000 men ashore and take possession of the town and the forts.

The reports of the enemy's landing in Kelung caused the confusion in Taipeh-fu to rise to the utmost. The soldiers had a strong suspicion that the president and his highest officials would take an opportunity to disappear and leave them in the lurch. They therefore posted a strong watch by the railroad station, since they thought that he would travel by the railroad to Kelung and then have a Japanese transport ship take him over to the mainland.

But President Tang was more cautious. The steamship "*Arthur*,"\* which flew the German flag, lay in the inner harbor and a little farther out lay the Norwegian ship "*Bygdø*" and the small Chinese steamer "*Kwangmo*." His Excellence

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\* The ship's name had been, and now is again, "*Cass*." It belongs to the earlier mentioned Governor Liu Ming-chuan and has for several years been commanded by Captain Jenssen from Bergen. During the war with Japan, the ship got German registry and was called "*Arthur*."

hoped to escape with one of these ships. By paying his guards 30,000 dollars he and a couple of officials were allowed to leave the governor's palace at midnight. They got safely aboard a steam sloop, but there was no way to get onboard "*Arthur*" due to the numerous patrol boats around this vessel. However, the fugitives got out to the "*Kwangmo*," and the steamer immediately raised anchor and headed over to the mainland.

After a presidential term of just 14 days His Excellence Tang Ching-sung could again breathe freely.

On the morning of the 4<sup>th</sup> of June it became known that the president had left the city, and then all order ceased. The enraged soldiers, who had not been paid stormed the governor's palace, seized everything of value, and then set fire to the building.

Most of the officials got safely aboard "*Arthur*," among them the garrison's quartermaster, who carried with him 45,000 dollars of the soldiers' unpaid wages. In the city it was thought that the president was onboard and therefore Captain Jenssen was taken prisoner when he returned from a visit to the European customs director. However, since it was just before low ebb, he was allowed to get back to his ship since it was impossible for "*Arthur*" to leave the harbor until the next high tide.

Meanwhile, the quartermaster's disappearance had been discovered, and a body of soldiers therefore went onboard "*Arthur*" early the next morning and demanded 10,000 dollars. The quartermaster had wisely concealed himself in one of the coal bunkers, but the money was handed over.

Captain Jenssen now gave orders to raise the anchor, but when this was noticed ashore, an infantry battalion on the beach sent a hail of rifle bullets across the bridge and fore-castle deck, so that the windlass could not be manned, and the ship was forced to remain where it was. In the course of the day more gangs of soldiers went onboard and the quarter-master was obliged to hand over the remaining 35,000 dollars.

In the evening another attempt was made to get out of the harbor, but then the commander of the forts sent a message that he no longer had control over the fortifications and that the soldiers threatened to sink the ship if it tried to leave. To show that the threat was serious, a shot was fired from one of the largest cannons, and the projectile passed only a few meters from the ship's bow.

During the night a mass of soldiers and other refugees came onboard as passengers. Since "*Arthur*" now had about 3,000 people onboard, Captain Jenssen felt he ought to make another attempt to get away. Seven o'clock in the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> of June, they again began to raise the anchors. A gun on shore immediately fired a projectile that went right through the salon and killed the head of the governor's guard, who sat at a table smoking a cigar. The shell fortunately did not explode. A half hundred prominent Chinese were gathered in the salon, among them the erstwhile lion of the Paris boulevards, General Tcheng Ki-tong, who had been serving as the new republic's foreign minister. A second projectile exploded on the top deck and killed 5 people. A third, fourth, and fifth shell resulted in the ship soon looking

like a slaughterhouse. The German gunboat "*Ilitis*" lay a little farther out in the harbor, but had not so far intervened in the fight. Captain Jenssen now signaled for help and immediately was instructed to steer behind the gunboat, which now had cleared for action.

This directive was followed, but by then about 50 passengers were killed or wounded. The first shot from "*Ilitis*" did not reach its target, but the second exploded in the middle of the battery that had been firing on the ship. Thirteen of its crew were killed, and during the subsequent confusion "*Arthur*" was able to get out of the harbor and out to sea. The next day it dropped anchor in the Chinese treaty port Amoy, where His Excellence Tang Chin-sung already had arrived.

Shortly after "*Arthur's*" departure, 2 Japanese warships came in to Taipeh-fu and a couple of thousand Japanese soldiers had meanwhile marched from Kelung. Since the Chinese soldiers had no officers, they laid down their weapons, and Formosa's northern capital thus fell into Japanese hands without any bloodshed.

About 8,000 disarmed soldiers were sent home to China as soon as it was possible.

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When the reports of the events on northern Formosa reached the southern capital Tainan-fu, the leaders of the independence movement called together a sort of parliament with ca. 100 representatives of the island's prominent inhabitants and offered the office of president to Liu Yung-fu, but the general declined and said that when peace was secured,



and he thus had shown himself worthy of their great trust, he would gladly accept the high office. Until then he promised to do all he could to prevent the Japanese conquest of Formosa and finally expressed his hope that the European powers would intervene in favor of the islanders.

At the same meeting it was agreed that the declaration of independence in no way should relieve Formosa's inhabitants from their oath of loyalty to the emperor of China. When the Japanese were driven out, the island would again unite with the motherland. Seven of the most influential members of the parliament were appointed to assist Liu Yung-fu as a sort of state council. Likewise a committee was established that was to come up with the necessary means to finance the war, which was not the easiest problem to solve. The soldiers' pay and support alone cost a couple of millions a month. Extraordinary taxes had to be levied. On the other hand, the customs duties were not raised, and under the direction of the Scot McAllum the customs service provided a substantial yield during the whole war.

However, the new government got most of its support from the mainland. The viceroys of Nanking and Fukien every month sent whole shiploads of soldiers, weapons, and ammunition. The wealthy merchants in Fukien showed their sympathy by redeeming a mass of paper money that Liu was forced to issue. The mania for postage stamp collecting was also used to raise money.

The introduction of postage stamps also had another purpose. The government decreed that no mail was to be sent from Formosa unless it bore the new republic's stamps, and

thus it could also ensure that it was not sent to Japanese addresses.

This is a facsimile of a 10 cent stamp. The 5 signs on top mean "Republic of Formosa", on the right it says "Postage Stamp", and on the left "100 *Tsin*" (10 cents). The middle figure resembling a tiger is the arms of the republic.



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During the campaign in Korea and Manchuria the Japanese had shown a high degree of thoughtfulness and caution. There was hardly any reason to criticize their treatment of the inhabitants or their military operations in general. On Formosa on the other hand, the Japanese committed major blunders whereby thousands of human lives were wasted for no good reason.\*

The ease with which Kelung and Taipeh-fu fell into their hands, and the joy that several Chinese merchants showed at their arrival, led the Japanese to believe that occupying the island would be child's play. Instead of landing large forces simultaneously in the north and south while maintaining an effective blockade of the entire west coast to prevent imports

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\* The Japanese found it best to attract the least possible attention to their operations. No official bulletins were given to the telegraphic news agencies, and Reuters' very unreliable agent did not think it worth his while to take a trip to Formosa. Thus, and for several other reasons, the European newspapers only contained a few occasional reports of the campaign.

of weapons and ammunition, the Japanese war department only sent 4-5,000 men to northern Formosa and thus gave the people opportunity to organize a powerful resistance. Another error was starting their march to the south without issuing proclamations like in Manchuria and Korea, where they announced that the soldiers would not in any way harm the civilian population, rob anyone's property, or impose new customs or higher taxes upon the natives. If this had been done, the Japanese would not have had to conquer village by village, defended with the fury of desperation by their inhabitants, who had been primed with the most horrifying stories about the terrible depredations of the Japanese conquerors.

By the 15<sup>th</sup> of July the occupation army had not gotten farther than to Tachcham<sup>\*</sup>, which lies ca. 90 miles south-west of Taipeh-fu, and here they were met by several thousand soldiers and armed farmers who inflicted significant losses on the Japanese.

The Japanese now began to understand the seriousness of the situation. Large reinforcements were sent from Japan and the army could move southward again – but only through burning villages.

The summer on Formosa is unbearable for anyone but the natives and the Chinese, who can thrive in any climate. The Japanese suffered terribly on the march. Thousands of soldiers fell sick and had to be sent back to Taipeh-fu or Japan.

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<sup>\*</sup> [Now Taichung?]

This did not help to generate kinder feelings toward the local farmers, who assisted by regular troops took every opportunity to attack isolated detachments. Both sides committed atrocities, which will be long remembered.

In hope of getting Liu Yung-fu to voluntarily lay down his arms, Admiral Kabayama, who had already been appointed governor of Formosa by the Japanese government, sent the general a long letter, wherein he first described the most important events in the war between China and Japan and the result of the peace negotiations at Shimonoseki. The letter continued:

"Lately the Chinese Plenipotentiary, Li Kaho, and I, the Governor of this island, met at Kelung and the islands above mentioned were formally handed over. The Administration by the Japanese Government was then established at Taipeh-fu and the island taken under our rule. As I hear you occupy Tainan with the intention of resisting our occupation of that portion of the island, I wish to point out to you how fruitless will be your attempts to oppose us. With the whole north at peace you will be unable to obtain reinforcements, and shut out from outside help as you are, success is almost impossible.

It is easy for you to understand this.

Your name is widely known, and you have the reputation of being a brave man. You are well acquainted with international law, but you go contrary to its precepts, as well as directly disobey the commands of your Emperor. In this you conduct yourself in the manner of an ignorant person.

If you will respect the orders of the Chinese Emperor, disband your army, and give peace to the country, I will beg my Emperor to send you back to the mainland with honors worthy of your rank,

and the soldiers in your command will be pardoned and given passage to their homes.

We sent from Taipeh-fu, Kelung, Gelan, and Hohe about 8,000 Chinese soldiers, carrying some with our own ships and in the case of others furnishing them money to purchase their passages on merchant ships.

As I have long been acquainted with your name, I offer you these suggestions and advice. Whether you choose to accept them or not, remains with you. — — —"



Vice-Admiral Kabayama.

In early September Admiral Kabayama received a reply, wherein Liu Yung-fu professed ignorance and pretended that he doubted that the emperor had surrendered Formosa and the Pescadores to the Japanese. Probably the Peking government had not sent the general an official message about it, leaving Liu Yung-fu to act according to his own judgment. The letter read as follows:

"Liu Yung-fu, Minister and Military Governor of the defences of Formosa, General-in Chief of Fukien and Formosa, gives this answer to

His Excellency Kabayama, Japanese Governor.

I received you communication; and offer you my thanks.

In this letter I find much that I do not understand. But of other points I will try to inform you.

The Chinese Emperor, having succeeded in a dynasty lasting several hundred years during which good was always done for our country, and friendships were established with other countries, has endeavoured, even to a greater extent than his ancestors, to do good for his own people and to be at peace with all nations. To make firm his friendship has he not sent Ministers to every country? And your country, Japan, being in Asia and a near neighbour, should have closer relations than all others, and by becoming strong allies we would thus both be strengthened. But your country has not thought of that, for without cause you declared war against us. Our country possessing many brave soldiers, pledged to battle for our Emperor, there with arms in hand, were anxiously awaiting your coming. But in our army there were some people who were not competent and therefore did not take advantage of the right opportunities, which resulted in our losing Asan, Ping Yang, Port Arthur, and Wei-hai-wei. The

battles were not lost because our soldiers were not brave, but because certain of our people could not comprehend the right time and plan of attack. But even if you think this was not so, you must admit that although all Japan's soldiers were engaged they were unable to fight their way into the heart of our country.

On the fourth month our good Emperor, unwilling that his soldiers and people should longer suffer, made peace.

I, Minister, with orders to defend Formosa, must cast my lot with the people.

Your letter says I am going contrary to the orders of my Emperor; it is this that I cannot understand. Also I cannot understand or believe that Formosa and all its islands have been given to Japan by order of my Emperor, and that his representative Li Ka-ho formally handed over the islands to you. If this is all true, why has not my Emperor notified me? And why did not Li come to Tainan rather than Kelung to inform me?

I wish to ask you whether, since the olden times, it has not been the rule and the custom when a person has been entrusted by the Emperor with the defence of a country to continue to oppose the enemy until orders are received by the Emperor to do otherwise. You are Governor and Chief of the Army, what do you think of this — am I not right?

I hear now by reports from my people in the north that your army is without discipline, that your soldiers are ravaging women, burning all towns, and killing all the inhabitants, and the people in Tainan are very anxious in consequence.

The people are under Chinese law and obey well the wishes of their master, and are flocking to me asking my aid.

Such being the feelings of the people, and I, Minister and General, being the Emperor's Representative and obeying his orders, I must protect this country and its people until the end.

Thus do I lay open to you my mind. It expresses my wish — my will.

You are capable of understanding the feelings of the people, and if I have made my position clear to you, I will be very glad. I thus have the honour of sending to you this my answer."

Kabayama now finally decided to send an army to southern Formosa in order to press Liu Yung-fu from both north and south, which should have been done when the war first began. The expeditionary force consisting of 13,000 men was gathered in the Pescadores under General Takoshima. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of October the troops were carried over to Formosa in 24 transport ships. The landing took place about 20 miles south of Takao\* under cover by a strong Japanese navy squadron.

A couple of companies were immediately sent out to reconnoiter. They arrived at a small village called Katongha, which was surrounded by a low wall with numerous loopholes. A couple of hundred Chinese had entrenched themselves here and received the enemy with heavy cannon fire. The Japanese tried again and again to storm the fortifications, but without success. They finally found a gate in the wall on the other side of the village. They forced their way in here and set fire to the nearest houses. A strong wind drove the flames toward the brave defenders as the Japanese moved forward.

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\* [ Now Kaohsiung.]



It was hopeless. The leader signaled retreat and the survivors leapt over the wall and sought refuge in the nearby forest.

The fight lasted only about an hour, but still cost the Japanese 16 dead and 61 wounded. The defenders left 70 dead behind.

Fortunately, the Japanese did not meet with this furious resistance as the army moved northward, since Liu Yung-fu soon realized it would be impossible to continue fighting now that he was threatened from both sides. He therefore sent a letter to the Japanese admiral and offered to lay down his weapons provided the Japanese would pay his troops their arrears of pay and carry both him and his troops back to Canton plus that Formosa's inhabitants over a two year period could choose whether to become Japanese subjects or not.

The Japanese admiral only sent a short reply stating that the fleet would arrive in Tainan's port city Anping at 12 o'clock October 12<sup>th</sup>, and negotiations could then be held in person between the admiral and Liu.

The flagship "*Yoshino*" appeared outside Anping early in the morning, but then sailed off to the south again and did not come back until 3 hours after the specified time. This made Liu suspicious and he declined to go onboard to meet with the admiral. He sent a couple of officers instead with instructions to demand a written guarantee for free passage to and fro.

This the admiral would not give, since he felt that Liu had sufficient assurance of his safety in the earlier letter.

The cautious general was of a different opinion, and the next day "*Yoshino*" left Anping without any meeting taking place.

Takao was attacked on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October, and since Liu had moved almost all of the garrison to Tainan, its strong fortifications fell to the enemy after a short bombardment.

In order to avoid unnecessary bloodshed, the defense of Tainan also was abandoned. In the night of the 19<sup>th</sup> Liu Yung-fu with about a 100 officers and bodyguards went aboard a *junk* and set sail for China without being stopped by the Japanese cruisers that lay off the coast to prevent his escape, since the Japanese believed he would be traveling with the English steamer "*Thales*," which then lay in the harbor at Anping. This vessel therefore was stopped and boarded on its crossing to Amoy and searched from top to bottom, which affair nearly caused a rupture with England.

Liu Yung-fu thus could thank his prudence for having avoided being tried as a rebel.

Emperor Kuang Hsü does not seem to have taken exception to Liu Yung-fu's highhanded conduct on Formosa, since around Christmas the Japanese government to its irritation could read about its enemy's appointment as commanding general in the province of Kuangtung.

As soon as the general's escape became known, the European residents in Anping got the soldiers to lay down their weapons. Most of them were quartered in Fort Zeeland and in the customs service's warehouses.

The Japanese northern and southern armies met together on the 21<sup>st</sup> of October and at the same time the fleet went to

anchor at Anping. The war on Formosa thus had come to an end for the time being, and a couple of days later about 6,000 Chinese soldiers were sent over to China.

The farmers in Formosa's mountain valleys also seemed willing to submit to the Japanese. It was quiet everywhere, and on the 14<sup>th</sup> of November the Japanese commanding general Takoshima left the island with most of his staff officers.

According to the Japanese official reports, the fight with Liu Yung-fu had cost them 38,993 sick, wounded, and dead. Among these was the emperor's uncle, Prince Kitashirakawa, commander of the imperial guard. He contracted malaria during the march to the south and died in Tainan on the 28<sup>th</sup> of October.

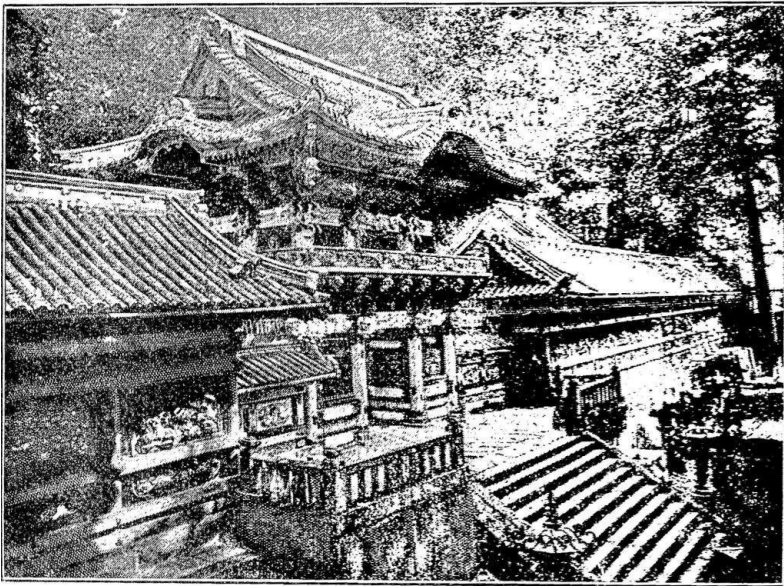
Prince Kitashirakawa was extremely popular in Japan. I can well remember this brave, good-natured gentleman from a military review in Tokyo when he galloped by leading the pride of Japan – the imperial guard.

In my earlier book, "From the Great Wall of China to Japan's Holy Mountain," the prince is mentioned in several places.

By birth he was destined for something quite different than warfare. He grew up in the world's most idyllic town, the wonderful Nikko. Here he was to live removed from conflicts and alarms of earthly life as the guardian of Nikko's 300 temples.

But fate dictated otherwise. During the confusion of the social upheaval 1868-70, a political faction took possession of the prince-bishop's person and set him up as anti-emperor.

Their plans miscarried, but fortunately did not have other consequences than that Kitashirakawa was sent to the war college in Berlin to be trained as an officer. Here he was wounded by Cupid's arrow and therefore was immediately recalled on graduation since a connection between the *mikado's* uncle and a German-born commoner of course was not considered acceptable.



A temple in Nikko.

When he returned home, he was declared heir to the throne, since the *mikado* was childless, but the following year the *mikado* got a son with one of his concubines, and Prince Kitashirakawa had to go back to the guard, which he later came to command.

The quiet on Formosa did not last long. The civil administration had hardly begun to function when the whole population in the northeast corner began to stir, and in January 1896 about 10,000 men were in the field to throw the conquerors out.

They even threatened the governor general's residence in Taipeh-fu, but reinforcements came so quickly from Japan that the uprising did not get time to spread southward, and peace was more or less restored before the month was out.

More or less – for, as long as there still are Chinese on Formosa, the Japanese cannot feel secure in their new possession.

The revolt broke out again in August 1896, and the punishments that the conquerors carried out in return naturally have not made them better loved.

In 1897 there have also been several bloody conflicts, and this state of unrest is likely to continue for many more years.

These conditions are not favorable for future progress on the island. It is an old saying that one can pay too high a price for gold, and this might be apposite for the Japanese conquest of Formosa. Japan will probably keep this island – the only material proceeds from the war with China, which has cost so much blood and money. Even if the Chinese central government should improve its military forces to the degree necessary to match the European and the Japanese forces in the area, it is unlikely that it will directly support its countrymen on Formosa, since China has never had anything but trouble from its possession of this colony.

Nor is it probable that the European powers will interfere in the conflict. England is afraid that France may seize the Pescadores and will therefore support Japan in this area.

If Japan in the near future also will stretch their powerful little hands farther south and tear the marvelous Philippines loose from its wretched Spanish occupation, then they will have done humanity and civilization a good deed and atoned for a little of what they have wrought against their peaceful Chinese neighbor.

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## Chapter Five

### Japan.

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**T**he most remarkable of all the new institutions that Japan has imported from the western world is without a doubt the new representational constitution that came into force with the opening of the first parliament on the 29<sup>th</sup> of November 1890. The *mikado* had already announced in a proclamation of 12 October 1881 that the nation would get a written constitution when he considered the people ready for self-government. The emperor's speech on this occasion stated:

"We announce to the members of the House of Peers, and to those of the House of Representatives: That all institutions relating to internal administration, established during the period of twenty years since Our accession to the Throne, have been brought to a state approaching completion and regular arrangement. By the efficacy of the virtues of Our ancestors, and in concert with yourselves, We hope to continue and extend those

measures, to reap good fruits from the working of the Constitution, and thereby to manifest, both at home and abroad, the glory of Our country and the loyal and enterprising character of Our people. We have always cherished a resolve to maintain friendly relations with other countries, to develop commerce, and to extend the prestige of Our land. Happily, Our relations with all the treaty Powers are on a footing of constantly growing amity and intimacy. In order to preserve tranquillity at home and security abroad, it is essential that the completion of Our naval and military defences should be made the object for gradual attainment, We shall direct Our Minister of State to submit to the Diet the Budget for the 24th year of Meiji, and certain projects of laws. We expect that you will deliberate and advise upon them with impartiality and discretion, and We trust that you will establish such precedents as may serve for future guidance."

\*

The institutions of a nation must be derived from and fashioned in accordance with the national character.

Transplanting political institutions from one country to another has never turned out to be very easy. We need only to remember how it went in Turkey twenty years ago, when it was attempted to create a national assembly there.

The Europeans and Americans might be forgiven for not taking it seriously when the Japanese also would venture the experiment. Those who knew the earlier history of the country were especially doubtful.

Japan is the only country in the world where the feudal system and its inherent militarism has had opportunity to develop to its fullest extent.



To be sure, the feudal system was formally abandoned in the social revolution of 1868-70 and the general military service ordinance of 1874 marked the end of the military knightly caste, but that the common masses who for thousands of years had been used to see themselves as chess pieces in the hands of their respective lords – that these broad layers of society should in the course of a couple of decades should achieve the maturity that a representative form of government requires, that most of the West's cultural historians considered impossible.

However, it must be said to the everlasting honor of Mutsuhito and his large circle of patriotic advisors that their great objective has largely been achieved.

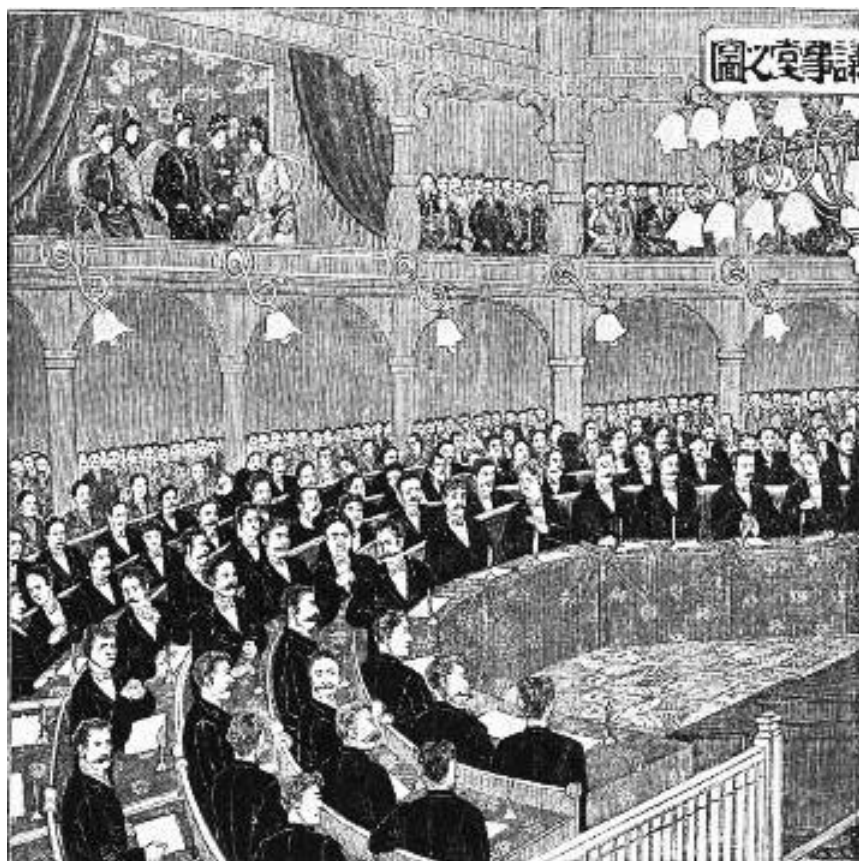
Today approximately a half hundred thousand public schools spread the clear light of knowledge to the farthest outlying skerries and up to the northernmost shore of the island Yezo.\* This must be the first time in the history of the world that an absolute autocrat together with a number of the nation's high and mighty – the former *daimyo* and their sons – have led the way to make their subjects ready for self-government and thereby lose their own power.

The Japanese parliament's composition can be said to be a reformed edition of the English system. As in England, the national assembly is divided into an upper and a lower house, but only half of the seats in the upper house are inheritable. The rest are either chosen among the largest taxpayers for a period of 7 years or appointed by the emperor for life.

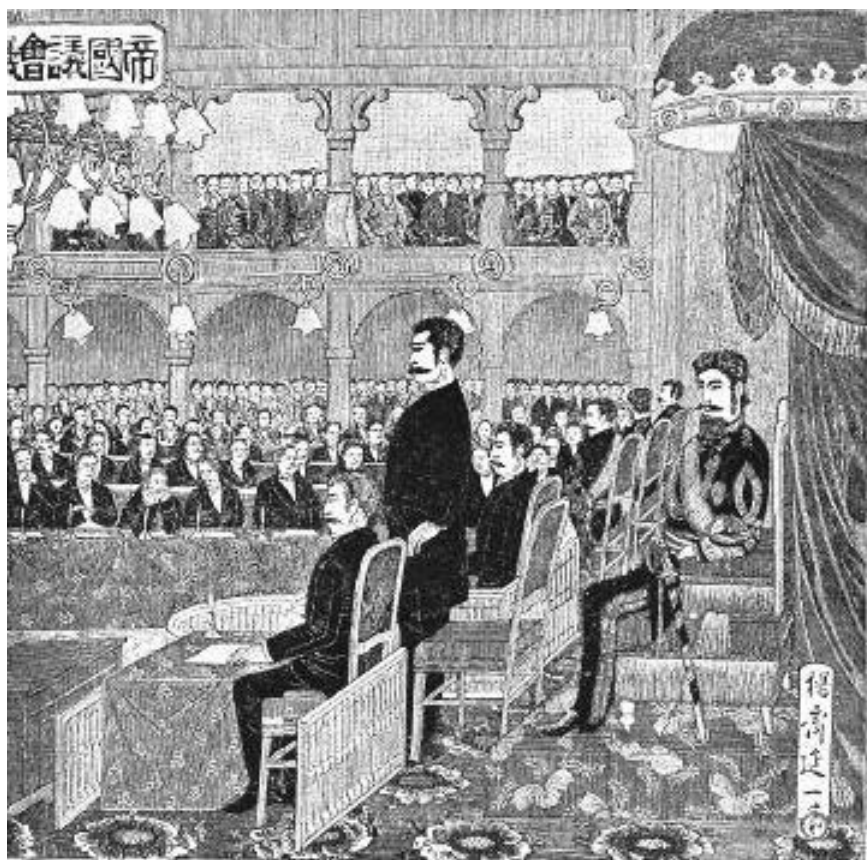
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\* [Today Hokkaido.]

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The opening of the first Japanese



Parliament, 29 November 1890.

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The lower house consists of 300 members who are elected by the people in direct elections. All men who are 25 years of age and older, have lived in their voting district for 1 year, and have paid taxes in 3 consecutive years are eligible to vote.

Members of the lower house must be 30 years old and are elected for 4 year terms. Parliament is in session for 3 months of the year.

All members of the lower house and the elected and appointed members of the upper house are paid an annual salary of ca. 600 dollars.

The Japanese statesmen have put much work into preparing the new constitution. All existing state constitutions were thoroughly studied, and the Japanese believe they have incorporated the best features of each in their own. If these extractions have been merged in so scientifically that no revisions will be required – this the future will show.

We often find reports of curious speeches in the printed parliamentary record that indicate that in this assembly too there are several mediocre professional politicians with a talent for empty rhetoric, but this surely is an evil that, as in our country, will diminish as the people's sense of responsibility grows.

\*

I consider the parliamentary system – ministers responsible to the national assembly – as an absolute requirement for a lasting constitution. A cabinet responsible only to the monarch can only be defended under extraordinary circumstances.

Count Ito Hirobumi, who has been Japan's prime minister for several years, immediately met a strong opposition in the lower house of the first parliament.

He reshuffled his cabinet in 1892 in hope of gathering a majority around his political program, but when he still did not get the necessary support, he got the emperor's permission to dissolve parliament.

Mutsuhito thought the country was not yet ready to put the full parliamentary procedure into effect.

A new national assembly gathered in May 1894, but the result was the same. Count Ito now ought to have tendered his resignation, but he did not. A war with China had been prepared for over many years. Why not strike now and turn the nation's attention away from the parliamentary strife?

This is probably what the prime minister thought, and with him a number of Japan's most prominent personages, who could not bring themselves to accept the new constitution. The war sentiment was stirred up in the government friendly newspapers, and the deplorable feud with China got its start.

Count Ito had apparently won the game. The Treaty of Shimonoseki silenced all criticism. Japan had achieved the position of a major power in the world!

But some months later, when the emperor on the 28<sup>th</sup> of December 1895 opened a new session of parliament, the cabinet's position was weaker than ever.

The speech from the throne made a good impression, and Mutsuhito received a reply from both houses that did not lack anything in praise for him personally. Parliament expressed

the nation's gratitude in the most complimentary terms. But Count Ito and the other ministers got anything but honorable mention.



Count Ito Hirobumi.

Born 1839

Already in the first days of January the opposition in the lower house laid an address on the president's table containing an extremely sharply worded criticism of the cabinet's performance – especially after the Treaty of Shimonoseki.



The document began with a fulsome reference to the emperor's efforts during the war; an example that had inspired the whole nation to rise as one man to serve the emperor and the motherland while the army and the navy went off with the firm intent to win victory or die. The result had been a wonderful triumph for the nation – a triumph primarily due to the emperor's great military virtues.

Thereafter came a compliment to the national assembly itself.

The representatives had been conscious of their great responsibilities and had appropriated extraordinary means to carry on the war and had not spared themselves for any exertion to awaken the nation's warlike spirit.

But then came the dark side of this splendid picture.

"The united efforts of the emperor, the people, and the national assembly had meanwhile been almost in vain due to Count Ito's and the other ministers' poor management of foreign policy. They had not only been unable to secure the rightful fruits of the peace negotiations for the country, but had even allowed the nation's prestige to be trod underfoot. Liaotung had been occupied as a part of the compensation for the blood spilled, but hardly twenty days had passed before the government submitted to the intervention by Russia, Germany, and France and gave the peninsula back to China. Such weakness could not fail to injure the prestige of the Imperial House and compromise the dignity of the nation in the eyes of the world.

When the empire is at war in a foreign country, the ministers are duty bound to keep a sharp eye on the neutral

powers and take precautions against any eventual hostile actions. Such vigilance and precautions are especially necessary when there are questions about war reparations and surrender of territorial acquisitions.

To conclude a peace treaty without taking these important issues into account is a serious dereliction of duty by the gentlemen who are entrusted with our foreign affairs.

The ministers were so utterly inept as diplomats that they did not even attempt to block the hostile alliance of Russia, Germany, and France by forming an opposing alliance with other powers friendly to us. They had not even the courage to rely on the justice of their country's cause and reject the demands of the Allies. In a moment of confusion and consternation, they only knew how to bow their heads to the interfering powers, thereby subjecting the country to unprecedented humiliation and disgrace. This has caused deep sorrow among the undersigned members of the lower house as well as among others of Your Majesty's servants."

The address further contained a critique of the government's policies in Korea – if the opposition had imagined that these shortly would lead to a revolt against the Japanese occupation on the peninsula, the terms used surely would have been even sharper. Now it was mainly the former general Miura's appointment as Japan's representative in Korea that was denounced.

"When recommending an official for such an important post, the cabinet ought to have minutely investigated the individual's qualifications. But how has the cabinet acted in this matter? They think that their responsibility ends at the

moment when they dismiss the embassy's members. But as long as the ministers who made the recommendation hold their offices, how can it be possible to show the world that the embassy's misdeed (the murder of Queen Min) was not approved by Your Majesty and the nation? The difficulties in Korea is absolutely a consequence of the cabinet's wobbly policy in the Liaotung question. Your Majesty may perhaps be so gracious as to overlook the ministers' negligence. But it may be feared that Your Majesty's lenience will conflict with the interests of the nation. The undersigned gentlemen would be guilty of disloyalty to Your Majesty if they stayed silent in this matter.

Convinced that several more difficulties will present themselves in the near future, it is the humble opinion of the undersigned and others that no measure is more urgently pressing than to resolve the question of that which has occurred – by dismissing the government. The undersigned in this way express the feelings of the nation and most respectfully beg Your Majesty's just resolution of this matter."

This address failed when voted on, but the publicized document still gave the *mikado* a strong hint that a cabinet that did not have the national assembly's confidence would only weaken his own influence and be harmful to the country.

It was not only in the political area that the opposition could present a list of failings. The war had cost ca. 100 million dollars and the war reparations would only be paid in installments. In addition large sums were spent to expand the army and the navy. It was no wonder that the finance

minister, Baron Watanabe, found it difficult to balance the budget despite increased taxes and customs duties, which had been adopted in parliament after Ito formed a coalition with the Liberal Party and included its leader, Count Itagaki, in the cabinet.

But when the budget for 1897 was being prepared, Watanabe could not cover the deficit and therefore submitted his resignation in August of 1896.

Japan's leading authorities in the financial and diplomatic fields are Count Matsukata and Count Okuma. Several years ago the former brought order to Japan's financial management, and Watanabe can be considered his pupil.

Matsukata was requested to take over the finance ministry and was willing to do so provided Okuma also came along.

However, this gentleman is a firm opponent of Itakagi, so this attempt to reconstruct the cabinet failed.

Count Ito now gave up his fight against the parliamentary principle, and the whole cabinet submitted their resignations to His Majesty.

After conferring with the leaders of the several parties, the emperor requested Count Matsukata to form a new government, and by the end of September the list of ministers was completed as follows:

Prime minister and finance minister: Count Matsukata.

Foreign minister: Count Okuma.

Interior minister: Count Kabayama.

War minister: Baron Takoshima.

Navy minister: Marquis Saigo.

Justice minister: Mr. Kiyoura.

Education minister: Marquis Hachisuka.

Transportation minister: Baron Nomura.

Agriculture and trade minister: Baron Enomoto.

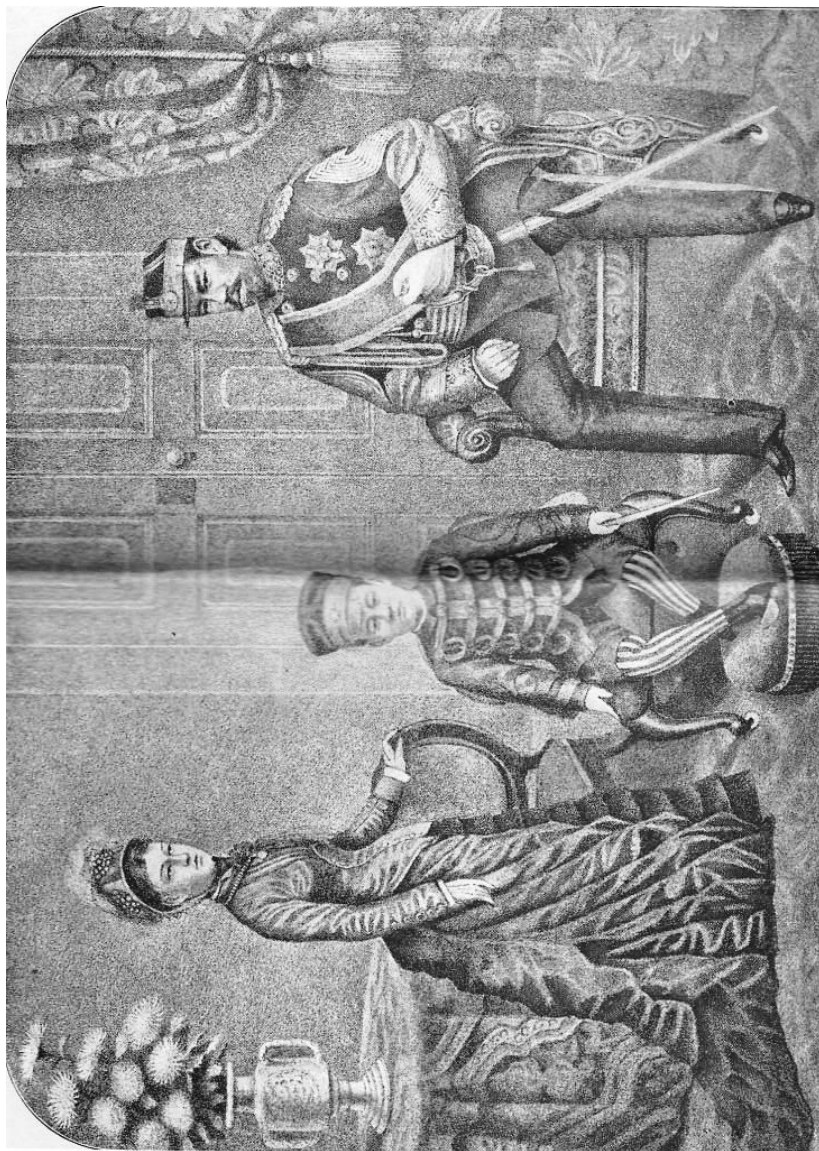
Marquis Saigo and Baron Enomoto also had been members of the Ito cabinet as was Baron Takoshima, who had led the campaign on Formosa.

Admiral Count Kabayama has been mentioned earlier as governor general on Formosa.

Even though not all competence and intelligence in Japan is centered in the new cabinet, the members are among the nation's most influential personages, and the press seems on the whole to be satisfied with the government change and happy about the recognition of ministers' being answerable to parliament.

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The Japanese imperial family.

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Besides losing Korea and Liaotung, the year 1896 was also a bad year in other respects for Japan. Earthquakes, tsunamis, typhoons, and flooding caused more deprivation and misery than the wars in Manchuria and Formosa combined.

There hardly was any district that completely escaped.

A tsunami in Northern Japan destroyed the whole shoreline for several kilometers and caused the death of 35,000 people in just a few minutes. An earthquake laid several cities in the northwest in ruins. In the Gifu prefecture, which had barely recovered from the great earthquake of 1891, storms and floods brought even more thousands to beggary, and so on.

But all this misfortune seems to have imbued the Japanese with doubled energy and enterprise. Industrial factories, banking institutions, steamship companies spring up like mushrooms. It is a nation that has faith in the future and has burned all bridges behind them. "Forward" has become *Dai Nippon's* motto.

Although the budget for 1897-98 show a great rise due to the increased expenditures for the army and navy, Matsukata has made it balance, partly by savings in other areas and partly from receiving the first and second installments of the Chinese war reparations.

The Chinese must pay in gold and that has made another reform possible in that Matsukata despite strong opposition has got parliament to agree to introduce the gold standard.

Shortly after the war broke out in 1894, the Japanese renegotiated their treaties with England and America. The brilliant results of the war also had a considerable influence on the negotiations. The treaties were concluded with advantageous provisions without Japan having to concede anything at all. According to the old treaties, which were forced upon the Japanese during the country's time of distress in the 1850's and -60's, the government could not demand larger import duties than 5 percent of value on European and American goods.

In the new treaties, the Japanese finally have the right to set their own customs tariffs.

The new treaties will also have a large effect upon foreigners in Japan, since the extraterritorial rights – the rights of the respective countries to keep jurisdiction over their own citizens – fall away as the treaties are ratified. Most of the European countries have followed England's example; among them also Norway.

Thus, in the beginning of the next century Japan will have full sovereign jurisdiction over all the Christian nations' subjects that may be present within the borders of the empire.

## Chapter Six

### Railroad construction in China.

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All of China proper is blessed with waterways. Almost too much so, since there is seldom a year without a more or less disastrous flood somewhere. If there is an area that has not got even a small tributary stream, this lack has usually been relieved by the construction of a canal connecting it to the nearest watercourse.

We Europeans think the Suez Canal is a pretty good piece of work, but what would we say about such a giant project as the *Yun Ho*, the Imperial Canal? It was completed in the thirteenth century and transects a ca. 1,700 kilometers stretch of country from Peking to Shanghai.

Still – waterways are one thing, railroads another.

We must not think that the practical-minded Chinese have been blind to the advantages of railroads, but the sons of the Celestial Empire do not like to rush into things. They believe there is still plenty of time before the end of the world.

By their brutal behavior, by forcing opium and missionaries into the country with cannon and bayonets, the Europeans have so far stopped the construction of railroads along with so much else in China.

To steer the colossal Chinese ship of state in balmy weather has been proven an exhausting labor through the centuries. The political weather in East Asia since the 1<sup>st</sup> Opium War in 1840 must be said to have been anything but balmy. No wonder that the pilots felt they had their hands full steering clear of all the shoals. Perhaps later, when the weather calmed again, they could outfit the ship with steam engines and electric lights then.

"Our responsibilities are heavy. A fourth of humanity is onboard. Let us sail cautiously. There is still plenty of time before the end of the world. No hurry." Thus the pilots have thought and thus they have acted.

The several treaties that the Christian nations forced onto the Chinese among other things provide the white race with extraterritorial rights – the right to be governed by the laws of their homelands as exercised by their respective consuls.

Of course it was a marvelous right and let us not try to tell a European or an American in East Asia anything different! The extraterritorial rights have now been in force for more than half a century, but I do not think this blessed right has worked to benefit those for whom it was intended – the European and American business world.

However, in return for this precious right the merchants have had to limit their presence to the so-called "treaty ports." They have been allowed to see the promised land that figura-

tively speaking flows with milk and honey, but to enter into the 1,600 walled cities is reserved for a future wiser generation that will know to give up its extraterritorial rights.

The Chinese certainly is a tolerant people, but to allow a mass invasion of foreign merchants who will not abide by the nation's own laws of trade – that tolerant they are not. The missionaries, who according to the same treaties are allowed to freely roam around the country, have caused them enough problems and needless expense.

In 1896 the money value of the trade between China and the rest of the world amounted to ca. 140 million dollars.

A ridiculous sum, when we consider what it could have been if the merchants were smart enough to make their respective governments relinquish their extraterritorial rights in China – as they have done in Japan.

The Chinese have not lacked the desire to build factories of every kind in every corner of their country. But for that foreign engineers are needed – and the extraterritorial rights lock them out. It is not permitted to bring in people who are not subject to the laws of the land.

Nor have the Chinese been against mining with modern machinery or traveling by railroad instead of drifting down a river or along a canal in a houseboat, but the extraterritorial rights prevent them from hiring foreign experts.

Thus the government has had to send young men abroad to Europe and America to learn. This has taken time and in the meantime the Chinese help themselves – as in the old days.

Another reason for the slow development of railroads in China has been the lack of money.

Wealthy Chinese are reluctant to invest their money in risky enterprises and the government – well, it has had enough to do with raising money for "war reparations" and other necessary expenses. If foreigners invested their money in Chinese railroad projects, the government would be obliged to share control of the operations with the investors. If disputes should arise in the future, the central government knew from sad experience how the barbarians customarily settle such differences. Since the Chinese do not wish to have their cities bombarded, they have wisely refrained from making use of the numerous foreign offers of financing.

A third reason has been the Chinese government's reluctance to buy railroad materials from abroad. Chinese labor, Chinese engineers, and Chinese materials for Chinese railroads has been the policy followed by Li Hung-chang, Chang Chih-tung, and other progressive Chinese leaders.

In 1895 there were only the following railroads in China: A short stretch of tracks from Hupeh's capital Wuchang down to some iron and coal mines. A short stretch from Tientsin to the port city Taku and a stretch from Tientsin to the Taiping coalmines. A railroad from Tientsin to Shanhaikuan, which lies on the border between Pechihli and Manchuria.

This last railroad proved very useful during the war, which surely has influenced the central government's present interest in railroad construction. This railroad will be extended from Shanhaikuan to Mukden from whence it will

be continued to Kirin [Jilin], where it will connect to the much discussed extension of the Trans-Siberian Railway.

As a thank you for the Russian intervention in the Liaotung question, the central government has granted the Trans-Siberian Railway rights to pass through a snip of northernmost Manchuria. It is to be extended from Kirin – not to Port Arthur – but into Korean territory.

The terminus of the giant railroad has not been decided yet, but I am inclined to believe it will be either Chemulpo – Seoul's port city – or Mokpou near Korea's southwestern tip.

A glance at the map of Asia will at once convince intelligent people that the passage through northern Manchuria by the Trans-Siberian Railway will be an enormous gain for Russia without any harm for China. The English and the Japanese certainly would like to see the Russians restricted to Vladivostok, but there is no advantage for the Chinese in that.

The Russians is probably the only nation that has a reasonably clear understanding of the Chinese race.

Personally, I consider a future armed confrontation between China and Russia to be almost unthinkable.

\*

During the war with Japan, the central government finally decided it was time to begin railroad construction on a large scale.

Just the rumor of this brought scores of American, English, French, and German capitalists to submit applications for concessions to construct railroads, but some



members of the Peking government probably had read about events in Egypt's recent history and absolutely refused to help the barbarians increase their financial interests in the country.

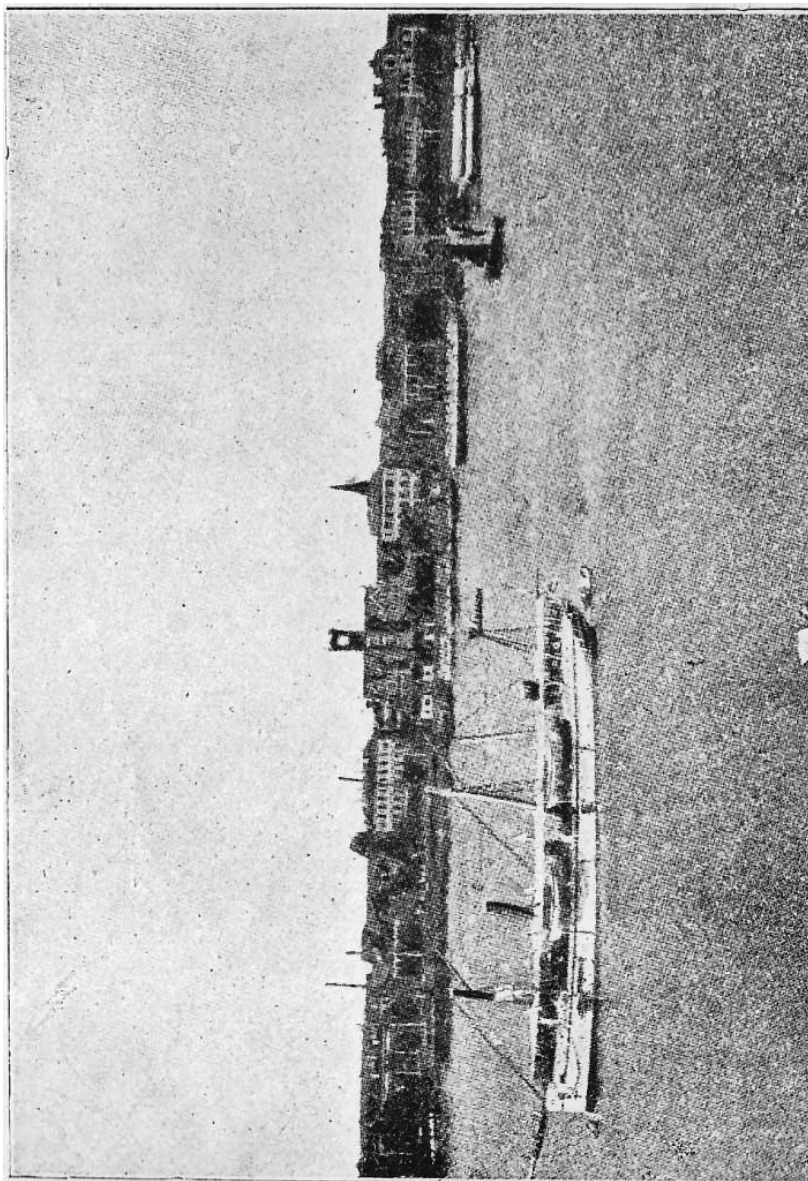
Only Chinese capital would be accepted, and since the government promised the Chinese capitalists that all bureaucratic interference with the eventual railroad companies would be forbidden, they gave up their reservations, and one proposal after the other flowed in to the central government.

Before the end of 1895, a company took over the construction of a railroad from Shanghai to the recently opened treaty port Soochow. The distance is not great, but the material rewards will presumably be so much the better and so encourage the extension of the road.

Shanghai will become Asia's largest factory town. After the war, foreigners have been allowed to open factories in the treaty ports, and no location is better suited for industrial production than Shanghai, which lies at the mouth of the Yangtze Kiang on China's Pacific coast. A score of factories with thousands of workers have already been established there since 1895. The foreigners thus themselves destroy their respective homelands' exports to China, since it is no use trying to compete with the cheap Chinese labor rates. The railroad's other terminus, Soochow, is one China's wealthiest cities and has about 1½ million inhabitants.\*

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\* Soochow is also famous for its beauty. There is a Chinese adage that says: Above us is the sky, but here on earth there are Hang and Soo," by which is meant the megacities Hanchow and Soochow, which lie near each other.



Shanghai.

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On the 6<sup>th</sup> of December 1895, the emperor approved another railroad project – from Tientsin to Peking.

Those who have read about my journey from Tientsin to Peking in 1892 will surely be under the impression that this project was sorely needed.

It has been primarily military considerations that earlier stood in the way of the project. The English-French bandit raid on Peking in 1891 is still in fresh memory and the Summer Palace has not been restored yet.

But these worries have now finally been overcome, and the railroad, which has already been completed, even has double tracks.

The emperor's decree of 6 December 1895 read as follows:

"With reference in the memorial of the Prince and Ministers of the Ministry of War requesting Us to appoint a high official to have the chief control over the building of railways in the country, it must be confessed that railways are indeed important considerations in connection with trade and commerce, and We have, therefore, decided that railways must be constructed towards that end.

The other day We commanded our Ministry of War to consider measures with reference to the intended building of a railway line within the neighbourhood of Peking, and in obedience to Our commands Hu Yü-Fén, Provincial Judge of Kwangsi, was selected for this duty by the said Ministry of War.

Their memorial based on Hu Yü-Fén's report is now before us in which it is stated that commencing from Tientsin and following the western bank of the Grand Canal, and thence northwards *via* the Southern Hunting Parks up to

Lukou Bridge (western suburbs of Peking) the distance between these two points is about 280 *li* (about 90 miles). The estimated cost for a railway between Tientsin and Lukou Bridge, therefore, will amount to something like two million four hundred odd thousand *taels*. We have also consulted the map of the proposed route, presented with the above report, and find that this estimate is reasonable.

In answer to the prayer that a high official be appointed to superintend the construction of this railway, We would like to remark that it is always a matter of difficulty to inaugurate an entirely new departure and at the same time be thoroughly prepared for eventualities, while it is necessary that We should have perfect confidence in the man selected for this difficult task. But as Hu Yü-Fén already on a former occasion presented his scheme in this connection and now has further had the experience of going personally along the proposed route, We will therefore appoint him to the chief and sole control of the building of the Tientsin-Lukou-Bridge railway. The Board of Revenue and the Imperial High Commissioner and Superintendent of Trade for the Peiyang are therefore hereby commanded to use their joint efforts in providing the funds necessary to build the proposed line.

With regard to the trunk line proposed to be built from Lukou Bridge southwards to Hankow, the line must necessarily be a very long one and will require an enormous sum to complete. We will therefore give to the wealthy merchants of the various provinces the opportunity to issue shares for the formation of a railway company for the construction of this line, the condition being that they collect ten million *taels* and above for this purpose. It shall be entirely a mercantile undertaking and the government officials shall not interfere with the profits or losses of the Company. We would exhort that one and all exert



Chang Chih-tung.

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themselves to the utmost of their ability for the accomplishment of this work, and we promise that if this be done well that we will accord Imperial recognition and great rewards to the deserving ones.

A special decree to all in Peking and the provinces."

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We see that the emperor in the end of his proclamation mentions a trunk line from the Lukou Bridge to Hankow.

This railroad project has been discussed for several years and is regarded with great sympathy by the central government; partly because the line with a proposed extension to Canton will do much to help tie the northern and southern parts of the empire together, and partly because the enormous rice transport from south to north no longer will be vulnerable to an enemy blockade of the coast.

Chang Chih-tung was the first to propose the construction of such a huge railway project. He was especially enthusiastic in his agitation for this project while he served as viceroy in Canton. In a brilliant and professional introduction to the emperor, he developed in detail how the plan was to be accomplished. If the document was not so long, I would have cited it here, since it gives a good idea of the viceroy's manifold talents. This proposed railway project presumably had a lot to do with Chang Chih-tung's transfer to the viceroyalty of Hunan and Hupei in 1889. Here he would have opportunities to show if he was the right man to realize such a great work, since these provinces have large deposits of coal and iron.



Already in 1893 the first little stump of track from his capital Wuchang and southward to a small town called Shih-hui Yao was opened to traffic. This was the beginning of the Wuchang-Canton line. Several side-tracks lead into rich iron- and coal mines since it is here in Central China that a significant part of the needed railroad materials is to be produced.

I may mention in this connection that Wuchang lies on the south side of the great river Yangtze Kiang. Just opposite on the north bank we have Hankow – Central Asia's major export center for tea.

The connection between the Peking-Hankow and Wuchang-Canton lines will thus be made with large steam ferries. The city of Hanyang lies separated from Hankow only by a low masonry wall. These 3 cities together have a population of ca. 4 million.

The viceroy has established several iron smelters of the latest design in Hanyang and the manufacture of iron rails had already begun when I visited Hanyang in the summer of 1891.\*

After the central government had closely scrutinized the bids received for building the trunk line, the emperor on 1 June 1896 sent a public letter to the viceroys of Pechihli and Hunan-Hupeï as follows:

"The Ministry of War in December of the last year recommended to give a concession for the construction of the

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\* See more in "Through the Land of the Yellow People." 2,500 kilometers up the Yangtze Kiang with the cruiser "*Ling-Fêng*."

Lu-Han Line\* to a Cantonese company headed by supernumerary *Taotai* Hsü Ying-chiang. We therefore commanded the referenced *taotai* to journey back to Canton and raise a guarantee fund of 10 million *taels*. We have now been advised by the Ministry of War that Hsü Ying-chiang has telegraphed from Canton that he has already succeeded in raising 7 million, and that he will personally bring this sum up to Peking in the middle of the present month.



The emperor of China, Kwang Hsü.

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\* The Lukou Bridge – Hankow Railway is abbreviated to "the Lu-Han Line" in official documents.

In the meantime, two other Cantonese companies have also sent in proposals to the Ministry of War. Both declare themselves able to raise a guarantee fund of 10 million *taels*, and at the same time request that We appoint a high official to head each of the companies.

However, the construction of the Lu-Han Line is of great importance for the welfare of the empire. If the capital is raised and handed over to the official administration, the prospects for a successful outcome of the enterprise will be very slim. The commercial members of the railroad commissions therefore should carry out their work only subject to the government's oversight. The line will pass through the viceroys Wang Wen-chao and Chang Chih-tung's provinces, and they are hereby commanded to make every effort to see that the enterprise can be brought to a happy ending. They are likewise requested to confer with *Taotai* Hsü Ying-chiang and the other gentlemen who are concerned in the enterprise. We consider it most practical to divide the line into 3 divisions and give each of the three above mentioned companies its division to complete. The above named viceroys will see that no hindrances are placed in the way of the aforementioned companies and are further commanded to keep a sharp eye on their statutes and see to it that no foreigner is allowed to buy shares in the aforementioned railway companies."

Kwang Hsü

Copies of this imperial memorial were also sent to the other viceroys and governors in the empire to make it clear that the central government took a warm interest in the railroad question.

Keeping in mind that the distance from Peking to Hankow is ca. 1,500 kilometers, and that the line must be connected with numerous bridges over bridges and canals, this must be considered a good piece of work to start with.

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## Chapter Seven

### **The central government's financial difficulties.**

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**O**ne of the many difficult problems the Chinese government in Peking has had to solve in the last century has been how to get money.

The Chinese have always been used to a cheap administration. Such demands as the European states' governments have been obliged to make on the taxpayers' purses have always been unknown in China.

Even at present, the ratio between a Chinese and a Frenchman's direct and indirect tax contributions is said to be as 1 to 14 although the ability to pay is equally high in both countries.

I have earlier mentioned that each of the 18 provinces of China proper has its own separate financial system. The officials appointed by the emperor, from the viceroy down to the local magistrate, get their salaries paid from the provincial

treasury. In financial regards, the Chinese provinces stand in about the same relationship to the central government as the American states to the federal government in Washington.

Under ordinary circumstances, the imperial government has each year assessed each province a lump sum to cover the expenses of the central administration, but since the European powers began their aggressive behavior in China, these sums have grown to a worrisome extent. The "indemnities" that the "Christian" nations have imposed on China by warrant of their military superiority add up to hundreds of millions of dollars. If the central government had tried to assess the whole amount on the province treasuries, the people would surely have refused to pay.

All Chinese authority is dependent on the will of the people. All the governing officials, except the emperor himself, spring from the people. The Chinese are the most law abiding nation in the world and a deep respect for their elected authorities is so to say imbibed with their mothers' milk, but if the officials were to try to introduce new laws or new taxes that the people considered unjust or unnecessary, then they would play a different tune, and the authorities would meet with a passive resistance that would frustrate any execution of the central government's will. Tyranny in any form cannot survive where the people's right to depose an unjust government is recognized.

The passive resistance often gives a good insight into the Chinese people's strong sense of social solidarity. We may call China "the El Dorado of labor unions."

Let us imagine that a magistrate has been ordered to increase a city's contribution to the provincial treasury by 10,000 *taels* and thus is obliged to impose new taxes.

Now, if the magistrate is not well liked by the inhabitants or he has not managed to convince the people through his proclamations of the absolute necessity for the tax, he may then wake up one morning and find that all the businessmen and craftsmen have closed their shops because the leaders of the different guilds and unions have called a general strike! Such passive resistance always works – and the tax must be cancelled.

That kind of general strikes have been quite common in later years, and we can thus easily understand how difficult it has been for the imperial government in Peking to obtain the funds for the required "indemnities." On the one hand it has had to defend itself against the barbarians' cannon and bayonets; on the other hand it has had to fight against the people's unwillingness to pay extraordinary taxes to satisfy the barbarians' avarice.

Of course, there has been no lack of offers from the foreigners to lend the Peking government as many millions as it might wish. One French, German, and English syndicate after the other has year in and year out tried to force large state loans onto the Chinese through skilled agents. That the government right up to the most recent times has been able to resist the temptation shows that it fully understands the dangers that can arise from accepting these kind offers. It has tried to keep the barbarians' "interests" in China to the least possible.



Sir Robert Hart at his work desk.



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But the millions had to be found, and remarkably enough, it was the Europeans' brutal behavior that resolved the worst of the difficulties for the Peking government.

In the ports that little by little were "opened" for the foreign trade, a special kind of customs service was established, which has now grown into a mighty institution under the leadership of the Irishman Sir Robert Hart. The income from the customs service in the treaty ports since 1854 has amounted to nearly 500 million dollars. The central government has had to pay a significant share of that to the provinces wherein the respective treaty ports are located, but the rest has been sufficient to meet the numerous demands on the central administration's treasury when added to the ordinary and extraordinary contributions from the provinces.

However, then came the war with Japan and the Treaty of Shimonoseki required the central government to pay the Japanese 300 million dollars in war reparations and 45 million was later added to that for the return of the Liaotung peninsula.

To turn to the domestic capitalists after such a defeat would of course have been as fruitless as forcing the 17 provinces which had not participated in the war to pay the first installment of the war reparations.

The government just had to be happy that the anger among the people did not lead to worse things than the Treaty of Shimonoseki.

Russia then offered the necessary funds – 15 million English pounds.

This put the government in a quandary. The Russians already had a strong claim to Peking's gratitude for their intervention in the Liaotung question. Was it advisable to add to this debt? There were serious meetings to discuss this problem among the emperor, Li Hung-chang, and the most prominent members of the Grand Council.

However, the result was that Russia's offer was accepted with thanks – and the tsar gave his servant maid France orders to make the loan with Russia's guarantee. As a kind of pawn deposit for repayment of the loan, the Peking government posted the customs income from the treaty ports.

A couple of months passed, and then the second installment for the Japanese war reparations was coming due.

Meanwhile, the several representatives of the Western nations in Peking fought a hot battle over who should get the profits of the next loan. The ministries of finance and foreign affairs were positively besieged by applicants.

The English and German ambassadors made almost daily visits to the *Tsungli Yamen* to put the case for their respective countrymen, and the Chinese diplomats seemed to listen now to the English and then to the German side. Then the French ambassador came with the Russian for backup, but accepting more French-Russian money was out of the question. The Chinese wanted to borrow from nations that could provide counterweights to the French-Russian influence, if this should become too much of an issue. And, of course, it was very important to get the money as cheaply as possible.

English and German banks began by offering 5% loans at 89½, but then a flood of offers from Jewish capitalists for

4½% silver loans and gold loans in pound sterling, marks, francs, and dollars came streaming in, and the Chinese diplomats rubbed their hands together, since they now had – as so many times before – got the major powers working against each other.

Finally Sir Robert Hart was asked for advice. He got the Bank of England and the Deutsch-Asiatische Bank to raise the rate to 94. This decided the matter. The loan was split evenly between the two banks, and the second installment was paid on 8 May 1896.

By the Treaty of Shimonoseki, 5 new ports were "opened" to foreign traders. This will of course significantly increase the income from customs. But installment repayments of the new loans still will swallow most of it. Where will the central government find money for its other expenses, for organizing a new army and navy, etc., etc.? This is one of the many problems that the central government must solve in the very near future. It can, of course, get all the foreign money loans it wants, but foreign money is dangerous. China's own Rothschilds, on the other hand, feel no urge to take over loans that do not yield at least 8 to 10 per cent., as interest rates generally are very high in East Asia.

## **Chapter Eight**

### **Differing views of the military in China and the Western nations.**

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**T**he conveyors of western culture try to hammer into the Chinese people's consciousness with their civilization's cannon – that if China is to take its place among the civilized nations, the vast empire must do as the small European nations have done: arm itself to the teeth and abandon the outdated idea that peace is for the benefit of the people.

But fortunately it will presumably take centuries before the Chinese masses change their views in the direction the Christian nations have recommended to them, although several Chinese statesmen have realized that, if China is to keep its warlike neighbors within reasonable boundaries, it will be necessary to acquire some of the modern war machinery – but it will have to be done slowly, since

increased taxes can bring worse misfortunes than reductions in China's areal extent. Besides, it will take a long time to acquire competent personnel, since the military profession has long been considered so discreditable that most respectable citizens have declined to either become officers or join in the enlisted ranks.

The disdain with which the Chinese regard their soldiers is illustrated by the following old saw: "As one can make a nail out of the poorest piece of iron, so can the lowliest subject serve for a soldier."

In Europe and Japan a military career is considered very honorable – in Germany, even the most honorable.

Many Chinese, on the other hand, find that the social positions of an executioner and an officer must be considered as equal. They do not believe that the epaulettes are the best identifying markers of a saint.

An emperor of China prides himself on being the chief protector of agriculture, and every year he goes in a procession with his ministers into a field and plows up nine furrows with his own hand while his high officials plant the seeds. The imperial princes must also perform the same ceremony.

In Europe, on the other hand, it would be considered ludicrous if Kaiser Wilhelm – who rules over a domain not larger than that of one of his Chinese brother's viceroys – went into the park at Potsdam once a year together with the *reichskanzler* and a dozen princelings and plowed up a dozen furrows in the earth to show his concern for German agriculture.

However, Kaiser Wilhelm is a multi-talented gentleman, so it might well occur to him to emulate the Chinese emperor in this peaceful endeavor.

But we must presume that the warlike Germans would prefer to see their Kaiser in a marshal's uniform astride a fiery Arabian reviewing his army troops – so different can the outlooks be in the East and the West.

A major reason for the Chinese disdain for the military officials is the low educational level of these gentlemen through the ages. The Chinese have not needed a scientific military establishment until they got into serious conflict with the Europeans in the First Opium War in 1840.

Since then they have little by little acquired some modern warships and cannon, and for that scientifically trained officers were required. Army and naval academies have therefore been established in several cities, such as Canton, Foochow, Nanking, and Tientsin. These officers have certainly done much to lessen the gap between the civil and the military officials, but have not yet erased it.

The war with Japan showed the central government that the Pechihli province's army and fleet were not sufficient to prevent the Japanese from invading the mainland. It was a costly lesson.

It is possible that in the future, the central government will order 3 or 4 provinces to participate in the war against an eventual enemy, but it is also possible that it continues to let one part of the country take the hit rather than spread the horrors of war over a larger area of the realm – in accordance with the old customs and tradition.

In Europe old traditions seem to be too lightly valued; in China too highly. The golden mean is difficult to achieve.

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After the war the Europeans assumed that the central government would hire thousands of military instructors and create a mighty army and navy. This hope has been completely frustrated. No large numbers of orders for war matériel have been given to European manufacturers since 1895. Approximately a hundred German officers and non-commissioned officers have been hired as instructors, and that is about all.

The viceroy of Nanking has been allotted 35 of these gentlemen and they have already gone to work. But what should be noted is the content of the decree by which the viceroy ordered the creation of a European trained corps, since he broke with the old tradition of calling the pariahs of society into uniforms. His Excellency wrote:

"Only well-formed, healthy, and strong farm boys may be accepted for military service by the officers in charge of enlistments. Attests of good behavior from the nearest neighbors or justice of the peace must be presented. Likewise, an affidavit that the applicant has not been convicted of any crimes must be submitted. The recruits must commit to remain in the corps for 10 years and will not be granted earlier discharge except for valid reasons. The pay will be 2½



dollars per month<sup>\*</sup> and a free uniform. Each battalion will be commanded by a German colonel and a Chinese 1<sup>st</sup> lieutenant. The native officers must have graduated from one of the war academies. For the time being, the corps shall consist of 8 infantry companies, 2 cavalry squadrons, 1 artillery battery, and 1 engineer company – altogether 2,680 men. Later, the corps will be expanded to 10,000 men."

Not a very impressive army for the viceroyalty of Nanking with its 50 million inhabitants.

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\* Required to provide their own food. Good and sufficient nutrition for a Chinese worker, soldier, or seaman can be acquired for 1 dollar per month. 2½ dollars per month and free clothing thus must be considered as good wages.

## Chapter Nine

### **The recent Mohammedan revolt in China.**

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**C**hina has had very extensive freedom of religion as a consequence of its old culture.

Believe what you wish, think what you like – as long as you fulfill your duties as a citizen and do not disturb the social order.

Since the origin of our calendrical system, the Chinese government has acknowledged this principle – a cultural level which we Europeans also have largely attained after the passing of 19 centuries.

When Buddhism first spread into China, this foreign creed did not meet with any resistance from the authorities. The new religion rather was favored because its value for the lower classes who could not be fully satisfied by Confucius' moral prescripts was recognized.

But when the disciples of Buddha tried to disturb the existing social order founded on Confucius' teaching, when

they tried to assume power, then the Buddhist intruders met a closed phalanx of the nation's literary and political leaders.\*

A religious hierarchy was incompatible with the basic principles for governing the country. A state within the state would be dangerous for the order of society. Thus reasoned the nation's leading intellectuals.

When the Buddhist monks understood that they had made a mistake, they changed their tactics in time. They did not bang their heads against the wall like the apostles of the Christian religion a thousand years later. Buddha's wise disciples bowed to reality. They recognized the impossibility of breaking up the Confucian foundation of the Chinese society and instead raised a temple over this solid foundation. Anyone who has traveled in China knows the strong influence Buddhism has among the Chinese – and this is because its adherents have refrained from forming a state within the state – the Buddhist priesthood has renounced worldly powers.

If the champions of Christianity had studied the history of Buddhism and followed the lead of the Buddhist monks, we may be certain that the Christian missionaries after 300 years of work would not have been obliged to find their "converts" among the pariahs of Chinese society, which is now the case.†

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\* The bitterest opponent of Buddhism was the famous poet and philosopher Han Wen-tung (768 – 824), known among the Chinese as "the prince of literature."

† See my book, "The Chinese and the Christian Mission."

Thus the Buddhist faith accommodated itself to the Confucian system of government without further confrontation.

The Chinese government had more difficulties with Mohammed's followers.

At this time there are ca. 20 million Mohammedans spread through all the provinces. Most of them are descended from Arabic, Persian, and Turkic immigrants.

The history of Islam in China is of great interest for cultural researchers, but here I will only give a short overview.

During a stay in Canton I visited a very tall dilapidated building with a lot of Arabic lettering on the walls. It was the oldest Mohammedan mosque in China.

It was built in Mohammed's lifetime by the Arab Wah Abi Kabscha.\* He was the prophet's cousin and visited the Chinese emperor as Mohammed's envoy around 630 A.D. The emperor received the Arab very graciously and gave him permission to build a mosque in Canton. When it was finished, Wah Abi Kabscha sailed back to Arabia to report to the prophet about the successful outcome of his mission, but by then Mohammed had already died.

Wah Abi Kabscha got a copy of the prophet's writings and with this he returned to Canton where he died soon afterwards. The Arab's grave can still be seen a short distance outside the northern city wall and is the Chinese Mohammedans' holiest pilgrimage site.

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\* [Actually Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, an uncle of Mohammed, according to Wikipedia, and he is buried in Mecca.]

A century after Wah Abi Kabscha's death, a larger number of his countrymen came to settle in China. It was a few thousand soldiers that the caliph Abu Giafer\* sent to help Emperor Soutsong† against a rebellious general. These Arabs were then granted permission to marry Chinese women and settle where they wanted.

Most of the Mohammedans in the southern and eastern provinces are descended from Abu Giafer's soldiers.

Since 760 there has been a lively trade connection between the emigrants and their ancestral relatives in Arabia and West-Asia. It is probable that mathematical knowledge and several inventions also were carried to China by this route along with Mohammedanism, which at that time was the bearer of Western culture.

The Mohammedans in eastern and southern China at present number ca. 3 million individuals and have never had any significant political influence. It is in China's western provinces, Yunnan, Kansu, and Shensi, that they have had better opportunity to distinguish themselves from the rest of the population.

Yunnan is about as large as France and borders to the earlier vassal states Tongking and Burmah.‡ Up to the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century the population in Yunnan consisted of several wild tribes subsisting by hunting and fishing. Kublai Khan

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\* [Abu Jafar al-Mansur]

† [Emperor Suzong] One of the last rulers of the Tang Dynasty. Soutsong reigned from 756 to 763.

‡ The Kingdom of Burmah has been a British colony since 1 January 1886, but, comically enough, the highest native authority in Burmah must still every 10<sup>th</sup> year send a tribute to the emperor of China.

then decided to civilize the country and elevate it to a Chinese province – a part of China proper.

The emperor appointed a Mohammedan named Omar as Yunnan's first governor and it proved to have been a wise choice. At his death he had brought the whole population in under the influence of Chinese civilization. However, at the same time Omar had also sought to spread his own religion among the new Chinese citizens and this later proved to be a very mixed blessing. The Mohammedans became the ruling folk in Yunnan and they soon showed an inclination to independence of the central government in Peking.

In this century there have been no less than four serious revolts in Yunnan. The last began in 1855 under the most favorable circumstances. The imperial government had more than enough difficulties with battling the Taipingers, whose leader the previous year had let himself be declared emperor in China's old capital at Nanking.

It was only after this bloodiest civil war in history came to an end that the Peking government was able to help its officials in Yunnan suppress the revolt.

The Mohammedans, who knew that they could not expect any mercy, fought with the fury of desperation, but the government forces arrayed against them were too strong, and on the 15<sup>th</sup> of January 1873 their leader, or sultan, had to surrender his capital Tali-fu.

Yunnan has been quiet since. At present, more than half of the province's 7 million inhabitants are Mohammedans. If the central government in Peking should come into difficulties in the future, the Chinese can probably expect a

fifth revolt, and the French will surely support an eventual uprising with all they have – unless their colonial possessions in Southeast Asia by then has gone the way of Italy's in Africa.

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Six years after the Mohammedans in Yunnan had raised the banners of revolt, their brothers in the faith in Kansu and Shensi also began to stir.

Four fifths or ca. 15 million of the inhabitants in these provinces are Mohammedans. Their ancestors did not belong to the Chinese race. They are Persian or Turkic peoples, immigrants from Bokhara and Samarkand.

In the last days of the Tang Dynasty one of the imperial generals appealed to several of the chieftains in these lands to help him suppress a rebellion in Kansu and Shensi. More than 40,000 men responded to his appeal under the leadership of Seyed Makhad. It took many years before peace was restored and in the meantime, most of the soldiers had married Chinese women. It was therefore quite reasonable that the immigrants answered: "*Tur gan*" ("We stay") when the government asked if they wanted to settle in the country or return to their former homeland.

From "*Tur gan*" came the designation *Turgani*, which in time changed to *Tungani* and is now the name by which all the Mohammedans in Central Asia call their brothers in the faith.

Since the Tungani considered themselves as outsiders, both with respect to religion and race, it was natural for them to gather in colonies and, despite extensive intermixing with the Chinese through the centuries, they have kept their inclination to assume a special position within the Chinese state.

Even in cities, where the Tungani are obliged to live on the same streets with adherents of other religions, they always manage to arrange it so that they come to live on one side of the street.

This inclination to separate themselves has been a constant source of conflict with their Buddhist fellow citizens, and of course, the Confucian officials have not been much pleased with the Tunganis' attempts to set up separate communities within the state.

This has often led to injustice and partisanship in resolving disputes.

In Kansu the Mohammedans have with time managed to form a league of allied towns and rural communes under their own elected leaders. The central government in Peking has closed its eyes to this as long as the Mohammedans have not disturbed their fellow citizens and have paid their taxes as required by law.

The most important of these Tunganian societies is Chinchipu, which lies ca. 300 kilometers northwest of Kansu's capital Lanchow.

Chinchipu consists of a score of walled villages which are again surrounded by a large defensive wall. Each village is ruled by a patriarch, or *imam*.



Farther west there is another powerful community called Suchow. The first chieftain of the Tungani, Seyed Machad, is buried here and the Sheikh ul Islam, the Tunganis' religious leader, resided here before the uprising. He usually was an Arab educated at the Sheikh ul Islam in Constantinople.

The worldly leader of the Chinese Mohammedans, the Caliph, resided in Shensi's capital Singan. However, this gentleman's authority was only partially recognized by the central government.

In 1861 there were several riots between the Mohammedans and the Buddhists. Since the caliph was not able to make peace between the parties, two imperial commissioners were sent out from Peking to investigate the problems.

Unfortunately, one of the Mohammedan leaders concocted a plan to murder the commissioners and one of the emperor's representatives was killed during a court session.

The Mohammedans knew from bitter experience how the central government would punish such a crime, and they all immediately took up arms to get ahead of the Chinese and take revenge for the injustices the Chinese high officials had inflicted on them in resentment of their separatist inclinations.

The uprising quickly spread to all of Shensi and Kansu. Caliph Daoud first tried to make himself master of Singan, but after seven months of street fighting he was forced to flee the city together with 20,000 of his followers. They marched off to Chinchipu and the Chinese did not try to stop them.

The Peking government had to leave both provinces to their own devices for the time being since it already had more difficulties than it could handle – a six years old child sat on

the throne, revolt in Yunnan, the Taiping Rebellion, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Opium War, etc.

Fortunately, the nation during this serious crisis in China's history had available such men as Tsêng Kuo-fan, Tso Tsung-tang, and Li Hung-chang. However, it was not until 1867 that the Chinese under Tso Tsung-tang could go on the offensive in Kansu and Shensi. The bitterness was so strong on both sides that quarter was seldom given. Every foot of land had to be paid for in blood. Suchow fell in 1872 and a couple of years later Chinchipu also had to surrender.

That was the end of the Mohammedan resistance in China proper – but outside, in the vassal states lying between Tibet, Mongolia, and Pamir, there are also many Mohammedans, and the flame of revolt had spread to them as well.

The high plains of Pamir in Central Asia can now be considered the borderland between the Chinese empire, Russia, and the Anglo-Indian empire.

Before the Manchu Dynasty, Kashgar and Kuldja (Ili) and the Tarbagatai region – which several geographers erroneously call Djungaria – had only a very loose connection to China.

In the old days there were no less than half a hundred kingdoms in these regions, most of them based on oases in the Gobi Desert. The mythical king Prester John was said to rule from one of these. It was at that time that the Nestorians spread the light of Christianity over Kashgar, though it cannot have been very extensive, since the Buddhist religion was predominant from the second to the eighth century after Christ.

Then the Mohammedans came and drove the Buddhists out again, and Mohammed's religion has ruled the area since that time.

Together with several Mongolian tribes, these Bedouins of Central Asia have been a scourge for the peaceful Chinese farmers.

When Emperor Kang Hi ascended the throne in 1661, he soon realized that China would never have peace until all of Mongolia and all regions east of the Tsung-ling Mountains had felt the force of his Manchurian warriors who now had taken over the defense of the empire.

His whole reign was occupied with his great political plan, which was only completed under his grandson Kien Lung (1735 – 1796), but by then China was surrounded by obedient vassal states with a total area of 8 million square kilometers, or four fifths the size of Europe.

Kien Lung keenly understood the danger that Mohammedanism might pose for the empire in the future, and for that reason he placed a garrison in all the larger cities of Kashgar and Tarbagatai to guard against a too large immigration of Mohammedans from West-Asia.

Since Kien Lung's time, these regions have been governed by Manchurian or Mongol officers.

Of course, this military rule was not agreeable to the Mohammedans, especially since they were discriminated against in many ways by the overbearing conquerors. The Mohammedans only waited for a favorable opportunity to offer armed resistance.

When their brothers in the faith in Yunnan and Kansu began to stir, they thought their time had come. The Manchurian garrisons and Chinese residents were driven out or eradicated within a short time, and in 1866 Yaqub Beg proclaimed himself king of Kashgar. He had advanced from a simple soldier to be the Mohammedans' top leader, and as long as Yaqub Beg lived, he managed to maintain his independent position.

But, unfortunately for the Mohammedans, he died after just a short reign, and when General Tso Tsung-tang had suppressed their co-religionists in Kansu and Shensi, he directed his energies at them. The Mohammedans had to give up after one of the bloodiest wars in China's history, and in 1878 the re-conquest of Kashgar and Tarbagatai was complete.

In the following five years the regions were governed by Tso Tsung-tang under martial law. His plan was to eradicate all traces of privilege for any one religion's adherents or any one race. He set his soldiers to cultivate the earth and invited poor Chinese farmers to settle in those areas that the war had emptied of inhabitants.

Tso Tsung-tang's wise governing soon bore good fruits, and the war-torn regions bloomed again. But then the emperor's Manchurian councilors proposed that Tso Tsung-tang and his Chinese officers should be withdrawn and replaced by Manchurian officials, since these had had a monopoly on all appointments in these regions since the time of Kien Lung. The underage emperor's aunt – Empress Dowager Tsu-hsi – fortunately was wise enough to lay the

question before Tso Tsung-tang himself, since he could best decide if a change would be desirable. The great statesman and warrior replied with a long letter in which he, among other things, stated:

"It was the Manchurian officials' poor management that was the cause of the uprising, which has cost the lives of 120,000 Chinese and Manchurians, in the first place. If Your Majesty wishes to lose Kashgar once more, by all means appoint Manchurian officials again. However, be assured that a re-conquest will be impossible because the Chinese people will refuse to shed their blood yet again for the benefit of incompetent Manchurian officials.

After 15 years of hard work, peace has been restored at the cost of much Chinese blood, and it would never occur to me to hand this country over to people who do not know how to govern it. Kashgar must be ruled by Chinese in the same way as the parts of the empire that lie inside the Great Wall."

This was straight talk, when we remember that the emperor himself was a Manchu. Tso Tsung-tang's advice was followed. The country was carefully mapped and divided into *taotai* jurisdictions, counties, and districts. In 1884 it was ready for the change from military to civil administration. The emperor appointed Tso Tsung-tang's able assistant Liu Chin-tang as governor of the new province, which got the name Hsinchiang.

Hsinchiang, which may be considered as the 19<sup>th</sup> province of China proper, includes Kuldja and Tarbagatai. Thus the danger of a new Mohammedan uprising in this region is less likely in the future, since Turkic or Persian Mohammedans

cannot demand any special privileges in a Chinese province any more than Mohammedans in India or Russia are given opportunity to form a state within the state.

The capable men that are sent up to Hsinchiang will see to it that such things do not happen. The expedited immigration of Chinese will also make the Chinese administration stronger year by year.

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That the central government in Peking in recent years has allowed the Mohammedans in Kansu and Shensi to live in separate communities and under their own laws is inexplicable, since it is in direct conflict with the Chinese political principles, and we should think that the uprising in 1861 – 1874 should have been a sharp reminder of the folly of allowing this situation to develop.

But the lesson does not seem to have been learned. The Mohammedans have been allowed to choose their own leaders as in bygone days, and thus they have been able to quietly hatch out a plot for a new uprising – despite repeated warnings from the high Chinese officials in these provinces.

The war with Japan broke out, and after the Battle of Pinyang the Mohammedan leaders in Kansu and Shensi offered to raise a volunteer army to help the Peking government under the pretext of wanting to revenge their brother in the faith, the brave General Tso Pao-kuei, who died a hero at Pinyang with half of his corps. For this purpose the

Mohammedan leaders requested to be provided with 50,000 breech-loading rifles.

This sign of loyalty caused much joy in Peking, but the commanding general in Hsin-chiang, Tung Fu-hsiang, who for forty years had had more or less unpleasant experiences with the Tunganians, immediately wrote a letter to the emperor to warn him against the trap. The government became suspicious, and the rifles were not delivered.

But then they got the viceroy in Kansu, Yang Chang-chun, on their side. He let himself be hoodwinked and guaranteed for the Tungani's loyalty. This did the trick. The government accepted their viceroy's word as good, and the Mohammedans got the requested rifles. For appearances sake, 3,000 Mohammedans also traveled to Shanhaikuan and enrolled in the army gathered there, but the rest stayed home and prepared for the uprising. The signal was given in March 1895, just when the war with Japan was coming to an end.

A district magistrate had arrested an *imam* from one of the Mohammedan villages in his district. The village's inhabitants considered the arrest unjustified and took the *imam* out of the prison with armed force and killed the magistrate and his whole family.

After this evil crime they left their homes and fled up to a mountain town called Hsunhua, which earlier had been chosen for the uprising's headquarters. 8,000 horsemen and 5,000 foot soldiers already were encamped here; all of them equipped with the breech-loading rifles provided by the central government.

Under their leader Ma, the insurgents immediately moved against the provincial capital at Lanchow. However, it then became apparent that the revolt was not as well planned as first thought. There was no general uprising among the common people, since the stark memories of the last uprising were still fresh in their minds.

Furthermore, the Tunganians could no longer expect any help from their fellow believers in Central Asia now that Kashgar had been transformed into a Chinese province with a well-ordered administration. The uprising therefore spread only over eastern Kansu. In Peking, they still worried that the events of 1860 – 70 might repeat themselves. This was partially due to numerous newspaper articles that painted the uprising in vivid colors.

The Peking government was especially anxious that Lanchow should not fall into the hands of the Mohammedans before it could be relieved. Time after time it was rumored that the provincial capital had been taken, but the rebels fortunately forgot to cut the telegraph wires between Lanchow and Peking, and the viceroy could therefore reassure the emperor on that score.

However, the Europeans in East Asia assumed that the government was only hiding the true state of affairs and for a long time were convinced that Kansu had been taken by the rebels – and of course, Reuters' correspondent telegraphed this piece of information to the European papers as a true fact. However, the experienced General Tung Fu-hsiang was appointed to command in Kansu and 12,000 men were sent up to reinforce the Chinese garrisons. In November and



December there were several serious battles with the insurgents, and the sieges of Lanchow and two other large cities were relieved.

Tung Fu-hsiang wrote about the war's later progress in a report to the emperor:

"After the imperial army had relieved the siege of Hsining, General Ho was dispatched with a cavalry brigade to drive the dispersed bands of insurgents into their villages. On the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of January (1896) there were bloody encounters outside Chinchipu. General Tseng then joined with Ho. On the 18<sup>th</sup> it was therefore attempted to storm the insurgents' strong position. General Ho was wounded twice, but refused to withdraw until all the villages had been taken. In the last, the leader of the Mohammedan insurgent army, Mullah Miao Yakub, had gathered a strong group and fought with the courage of desperation and energy until a rifle bullet put an end to his life.

Encouraged by the death of their strongest opponent, the imperial troops swept all before them and gave no pardon.

After the fall of Chinchpu, the insurgents also had to raise their sieges of the nearby towns, and for many miles around there were no armed Mohammedans to be found. The insurgents are left with only a few fortified towns northwest of Hsining. They seem to have lost courage and are fleeing into Mongolia."

General Tung Fu-hsiang was right. Their spirit was broken. In September 1896 he could report to the emperor that every last Mohammedan in Kansu had laid down his weapons.

It is still not known what steps the central government will take to avoid any more disturbances from that quarter in the future, but that the Tunganis will have to give up their old privileges can be taken for granted.

Any specially privileged group weakens society.

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I have given more space to the Mohammedan question than its influence on China's overall domestic policies would warrant, but it is done intentionally in order to give a little insight into the difficulties that the government of a country as large as all of Europe combined has to contend with.

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## Chapter Ten

### Chiang Hsü Hui.

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**C**hiang Hsü Hui is the name of a society that some young Chinese formed in Canton in the summer of 1895.

The war with Japan opened the eyes of many of the Celestial Empire's sons. Even several of the conservative censors had to admit that there were *some* elements in Western civilization that might have benefit for the nation – as had been proved by the Japanese.

The first to present the idea of forming a society to spread the European science was a Member of Hanlin named Kong Chang-fu. This gentleman has in recent years become known for his political-philosophic works which the ultraconservative fraction of the official class has considered revolutionary.

Since the progressive faction after the war found willing ears among many members of the central government, Kong Chang-fu thought the time had come to bring his plans for reforms to realization. He gathered some of his friends around him – and Chiang Hsü Hui, or the "Reform Society" was born.

Since I believe this society may have an extra-ordinary influence in China's future, I will name several of its founding members. They will likely set their marks on their homeland's history.

Chen Chih-liang, secretary of the Grand Council; the censor Wang Yu-hsia; Yuan Shih-kai, imperial commissar in Korea before the war; Ting Shu-heng, Member of Hanlin; Wêng Tao-fu, Member of Hanlin and nephew of the emperor's tutor, Wêng Tung-ho, who also heads the department of finance; Tsêng-freh, Member of Hanlin and son of the late ambassador in Europe, Marshal Tsêng. Also a nephew of Prince Li and a son of the viceroy Chang Chih-tung.

Wang Chih-chun, who negotiated the secret treaty with Russia in 1894, is among the society's honorary members.

All these names are well known among the Chinese, and it soon became fashionable for the most intelligent young people to seek membership in Chiang Hsü Hui. Fifty of the 400 "immortals" of the Hanlin Academy joined the society in just the first couple of months. Since the holders of the empire's highest offices are all members of Hanlin, we can understand the importance of that statement.

As evidence of the interest that the society attracted, it may be mentioned that Chang Chih-tung immediately gave ca. \$5,000 to fund its work and the emperor's tutor, Wêng Tung-ho, donated a fully equipped book printing shop to the society.

The first number of the society's newspaper came out shortly after its founding. It is called *Wan Kuo Kung Pao*, or "World News Magazine" and is published every other day.

Intelligent young men in several of the large cities followed the example of the Peking elite. An offshoot of Chiang Hsü Hui sprang up even up in the Shensi capital Singan.

In Shanghai, from where the society could reach out to all parts of the empire, a brother of Kong Chang-fu took over the leadership and the publication of a newspaper with the same name as the Peking paper. The first number from Shanghai began with a foreword by the viceroy Chang Chih-tung, who is counted among the leaders of the empire's innumerable authors. Then came the society's social-political program, which in essence amounts to work for: "that the Chinese people, as the world's largest nation, through education and knowledge shall again be first in the world. The Europeans have in the last centuries progressed farther than the Chinese in several respects; therefore it is essential to publish translations of the scientific European literature as widely as possible. The moral basis of the society is Confucian. The members will therefore work for that the time reckoning be reformed such that the Year 1 begins with the death of Confucius (479 B.C.)."

It goes without saying that the reform society's activities would meet with a strong resistance from the conservative circles in Peking. The same would have been the case in Berlin or Paris if the intelligent youth of Germany or France formed a society to work for the dissemination of Chinese people's moral civilization and the political philosophies of the Chinese government. Prejudice and racial pride would certainly find outlets in scornful criticism and perhaps in active persecution by the powers that be.

This is indeed what happened to the reform society in Peking, especially when its newspaper already in its first issues printed several imprudent statements. It was especially the censors who became enraged over this new reform movement. One of them, named Chang, stated forthrightly in a letter to the emperor that the society's activities were revolutionary and a danger to the dynasty. Kuang Hsü received the same warning from several of his most trusted councilors. The result was that he in December 1895 ordered the society to be dissolved.

This step by the imperial government of course caused both sorrow and joy. At the New Year's audience the emperor himself brought up the matter in his speech and stated the reasons for his antagonism to the reform movement. Several of the ministers then began to defend the society's activities and offered to personally stand guarantee for the members' loyalty. They further stated that the last war had shown the necessity for spreading knowledge of the Western nations' sciences.

The emperor listened attentively to the society's defenders and finally expressed his regrets for having too willingly lent an ear to the opposition's negative views of the reform movement.

It also soon became apparent that the society had much too many well-wishers for it to be suppressed for long. A couple of months later the members could resume their activities in a slightly altered form and with the emperor's language tutor, Sun Chia-mia, as their leader. The society has also been put under the protection and supervision of the Tsung-li Yamen.\* This will of course put a damper on any too radical projects.

The reform society's chapter in Shanghai has rented a building inside the English settlement and thus practically is quite outside the Chinese authorities' control. It will therefore probably be the Shanghai chapter that will fire the heaviest projectiles against the conservative bastions.

When we remember that most Chinese can read and write, and when we remember that the nation's learning ability and memory is more developed than in any other people on earth – then we will understand the significance that this reform movement will have for the white race in the East.

It will, of course, take a long time for 400 million people to be infused with a reform minded spirit. They will always weigh the old against the new. But as the late statesman Marquis Tsêng once wrote in *Asiatic Review*: "There is no hurry – it will be a long time before the world comes to an

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\* The Foreign Ministry.

end. The Chinese will surely eventually take the place they are entitled to among the nations of the world."

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## Chapter Eleven

### **Li Hung-chang and his journey around the world.**

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If a decade ago a book under the title "Li Hung-chang's Fatherland" had been published, most people would have asked: Who is Li Hung-chang and which is his fatherland? But today any civilized European, or American, knows that when I call China "Li Hung-chang's Fatherland," it is because Li Hung-chang is the most prominent representative of the Chinese race in this century.

This certainly indicates progress in our knowledge of the world's oldest and largest empire.

When we sometime in the future get a world history that also includes the yellow races, we will also be informed that Li Hung-chang – apart from that his field of activity has been larger than that of any other statesman – belong among history's most impressive personalities.

I will end this work with a brief biography and an outline of Li Hung-chang's journey around the world in 1896.\*

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Once upon a time – we may well begin thus, even though Li's career has many parallels in China, it will still sound like fairytale to European ears. So, once upon a time there was a poor woodcutter, I do not remember his name, but it was something quite common, perhaps Chang or Chen; names as common as Hansen or Olsen with us. His home village was Hweilung – a small, poor village in the Chinese province Anhui.

The woodcutter had two sons, Han and Hung, and when these were 6 – 8 years old, he died.. His widow married again to a scholar who was a little better off. He brought up his stepsons to the best of his ability, and in their early twenties both Han and Hung passed their first examinations with top grades. Both assumed their stepfather's family name, Li.

The two young men have not shamed the name. The oldest of the brothers, Li Han-chang, retired in 1894 from the viceroyalty of Canton after more than half a century of distinguished service for the empire. The youngest, Li Hung-chang – well, he could have ascended to the Dragon Throne if he had wished.

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\* In consideration for the foreign translations of my works, I have here repeated parts of his biography from "From the Great Wall of China to Japan's Holy Mountain" almost verbatim.

Li Hung-chang's career before he was appointed viceroy in the capital's province, Pechihli, was in brief as follows:

When the young scholar finished his studies in 1849, the Taiping Rebellion was just in its infancy. Li immediately joined the imperial generalissimo Tsêng Kuo-fan's army and was appointed the commander's secretary.

Tsêng had already discovered the potential of the young man on a previous occasion and did what he could to advance him. Li thus could thank his benefactor for being appointed *futai*, or governor, over the province Kiangsu already in 1861.

It was in this capacity that the future statesman came into contact with the "barbarians," since Kiangsu's capital, Soochow, at that time was in the hands of the rebels, and Li therefore had to establish his headquarters in Shanghai – the province's second city.

From here, he directed a successful campaign against the insurgents. He often went into the field himself, but it was only after he joined up with "The Ever Victorious Army"\* under Colonel Gordon that he managed to drive the Taipingers all the way out of his province and thus put an end to the rebellion. The capital Soochow was stormed by Gordon and Li as allies in 1863 and this ended the uprising.

It was on this occasion that Li committed a deed, which was condemned in the strongest terms at the time. He let five

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\* This corps, which the Chinese called "The Ever Victorious Army," was set up by an American adventurer named Ward. It consisted mainly of European and American riffraff. Later, when Gordon took over the command, a number of English officers and soldiers joined the corps.

of the captured Taiping generals be executed even though Gordon had promised them life.

The chivalric Englishman was of course enraged, and it was a near thing, that the future hero of Khartoum with his army might have broken with the imperial cause and gone over to the rebels. But fortunately for China Gordon was not a man who could stay angry. He reconciled with Li, and when England soon afterward rescinded its permission for its officers to serve in the imperial army, Gordon was inundated with Chinese honorary awards.

The leader of "The Ever Victorious Army" later re-visited China and then was a guest of his old comrade in arms in his vice-regal palace in Tientsin. All ill will on both sides had then dissolved, and Li Hung-chang did all that was in his power to honor his guest.

Gordon must have had to admit that Li had only done what the circumstances demanded. If the five rebel generals had not been executed, the civil war might have lasted still a few years more.

It is obvious that the Peking government approved of Li's actions, since the young governor shortly afterward was given the title of "the emperor's junior guardian."

After he had cleared his own province of Taipingers, Li and his army joined his old benefactor Tsêng Kuo-fan, who had begun the siege of Nanking, the Taiping emperor's capital.

With the fall of Nanking on 19 July 1864 and the death of Hung Hsiu-chuan, this lamentable civil war, which the

English opium trade and the missionaries had been the indirect causes of, came to an end.

There was now plenty to do for talented young men like Li to bring back order in southern China, and it was at this time that he began to attract more than usual attention in Peking. In 1866 he was appointed viceroy over two provinces, Kiangsi and Kiangsu.

Then came the deplorable massacre of the French nuns in Tientsin in 1870. The imperial government had reason to fear that the Western powers would pay another visit to Peking. In their need they appointed their most capable and best acquainted with the Europeans viceroy to administrate the capital's province, Pechihli.

From now on Li Hung-chang began to create for himself a position without precedent in the Celestial Empire's two thousand year history – a position that has no name in the Chinese language – as the empire's foreign minister, prime minister, chancellor, or whatever else it might be called in Europe.

Li Hung-chang managed to pacify the foreign ambassadors, and the Peking government could relax.

Since then the great viceroy has gone into the breach more than once to bring the Peking court out of innumerable difficulties with the Western powers and since 1870 he has signed all treaties on behalf of the emperor.

As viceroy in Tientsin Li Hung-chang got both the power and the means to carry out many reforms – and all the progress that has been achieved in China in the last twenty years is largely due to him.

There is not room here to tally up all that the clear-sighted statesman has done for his country, but the violent opposition which he has met with shows that he has carried out his reforms without letting his conservative fellow countrymen's screaming and yelling disturb him.

The feared censors in Peking have often tried to bring him down, but Li Hung-chang has always been able to count on the powerful support of the Empress Dowager Tsu-hsi\* – since she will never forget that he helped her survive the most dangerous moment in her life.

It happened in January 1875. Her son, the young Emperor Tung Che, lay on his deathbed, and a strong faction had formed among several members of the dynasty and some high officials aiming to overthrow the empress dowager and her friends as soon as Tung Che's eyes were closed.

The empress dowager got wind of this and immediately sent an urgent message to Li Hung-chang in Tientsin. He did not lose a moment, but secretly marched up to Peking with 4,000 European trained soldiers. After 36 hours he stood in the middle of the night outside one of the gates in the city wall, where the empress dowager had arranged to post one of her adherents as gate commander.

Li Hung-chang and his trusted guard now warily marched almost soundlessly into "the Forbidden City." Here the viceroy was met by the empress dowager's servants, who showed him the way to the barracks where the suspect elements of the garrison were quartered. They were disarmed

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\* See the biography of this remarkable woman in "Through the Land of the Yellow People."

without offering resistance and locked up in the prisons. Several leaders of the revolutionary faction suffered the same fate.

The surprise was complete, and when Tung Che died on the 12<sup>th</sup> of January, the empress dowager's nephew – a child 4 years old – was proclaimed emperor under the name Kuang Hsü.

After having completed their mission, Li Hung-chang and his troops marched out of Peking again in the still of the night and went back to Tientsin.

The whole operation had been conducted so quietly that only those who were directly interested in the coup d'état knew what had occurred inside "the Forbidden City."

A civil war, or at least a bloody palace revolution, had been averted. But if Li Hung-chang had wished it – he could easily have taken the throne for himself. The empress dowager knew this and as reward for his loyalty she has always held her powerful hand protectively over his head.

Twenty years passed after this memorable winter night. Then came the war with Japan.

China has probably never before been so lacking in military capacity. Tsêng Kuo-fan, who together with Li and Gordon had suppressed the Taiping Rebellion, Tso Tsung-tang, and Liu Chin-tang, who took Turkestan back from the sons of Yakub Beg – had all mounted the dragon and ascended into the blue heavens. Only Li Hung-chang was left, overburdened with administrative duties and too old to take the field himself with the army and fleet he had so strenuously brought into being.

The Japanese victories in Korea brought Li Hung-chang's innumerable critics and enemies to the fore at the Peking court. They now saw a chance to bring down the over-mighty satrap, who had always avoided the palace intriguers' arena – the concubines' happy hunting grounds – while leading the Chinese ship of state through frothing breakers and dangerous shoals. The old pilot was to be cut down to size, so that he no longer would loom so large over all the pygmies in the emperor's entourage.

Despite the empress dowager's efforts to prevent it, the old ultra-conservative bureaucrats in Peking got through an imperial decree intended to remind Li Hung-chang that he was only a subject – and not the "Son of Heaven."

The decree was dated 17<sup>th</sup> of September 1894, the same day as Li Hung-chang's fleet fought its brave battle at Yalu – and read as follows:

"The *Wo-jen*\* revoked the treaty existing between the two countries and commenced hostilities and forced their way into Korea. Entertaining a kindly feeling toward our vassal state, we, therefore, dispatched our forces to Korea to punish our foe.

Li Hung-chang, minister superintendent of northern trade, was appointed general director in the management of our military affairs and he should have given thorough consideration of the general interests at stake, made the best possible arrangements, and satisfied all necessary requirements. He alone was responsible for the trust imposed upon him. But he has not been prompt in the dispatch of troops at opportune times, and a long period has elapsed without suc-

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\* The Chinese usual name for the Japanese. *Wo-jên* means "dwarf people."



cessful achievements. He has failed to properly discharge the duties of his office.

Therefore, let him be deprived of the "Three-eyed Peacock Feather" and the "Yellow Riding Jacket" as a light form of punishment.\* He must, however, make an effort and earnestly awake to action and give orders urging the officers in command of our forces in the various places in Korea to exert themselves, pursue and join battle with the enemy, as an atonement for the errors committed.

Kwang Hsü"

We may well imagine that the old statesman read this naïve epistle with an irritated smile. He knew that everything from his side had been done in order to preserve peace and hinder the Japanese aggression. Pechihli's fortifications, army and fleet, the harbors at Port Arthur and Wei-hai-wei, all were the fruits of his unbending energy. But he now stood alone with an enormous responsibility on his old shoulders, without the authority of the imperial imprimatur, and had to lead the fight alone with the help of dishonest subordinate officials and incompetent generals.

This task was too heavy, and the Japanese military superiority too overwhelming.

The war ended with the Treaty of Shimonoseki. Without Li Hung-chang, it would certainly have ended with a Treaty of Peking – and would surely have been a lot harder.

The emperor had appointed His Excellence Wang Wên-chao as acting viceroy of Pechihli during Li Hung-chang's

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\* These decorations are Chinese equivalents of the highest military honors in Europe.

absence for his mission in Shimonoseki. When Li returned to Peking with the signed peace treaty, he surely wished to resume the administration of his viceroyalty despite his advanced age, but that did not come to pass.

Li's enemies got the emperor to keep him in Peking to conclude the new trade pact with the Japanese envoy, Baron Hayashi. This work could just as well have been done in Tientsin, where Li Hung-chang often had signed treaties, but then he would have regained his old influence, and this had to be prevented.

His enemies, both among the Europeans and his own countrymen, crowed loudly, since they now believed that the masterly statesman had played out his role, and anyone, who hoped to get anything from the gentlemen who would hold the reins after Li Hung-chang's departure, did what they could to overturn the listing wagon.

However, Li Hung-chang took the situation with crushing indifference – as usual.

It is quite amusing to read the gloating editorials that the European press in China printed in early 1896. They could hardly find words to express their barely veiled hatred of this superior Oriental, who always had mucked up the plans of the smartest European diplomats for extending their colonial privileges in China and so often had successfully insisted that China was for the Chinese and not for the foreigners' railroad, steamship, or God knows what kind of syndicates.

However, it is still more amusing to read the flustered headline articles in February, wherein the public was informed that the emperor had delegated to Li Hung-chang –

bypassing the imperial princes and other viceroys of the empire – the honor of representing him at the coronation of the Russian tsar in Moscow.

The astonishment in East Asia was general. Once more it had been shown that the old empress dowager and Li Hung-chang could match wits with any enemy – even when the young emperor stood on the other side and wanted to escape their guardianship.

Li Hung-chang's mission was not only symbolic – this was also understood in Europe. When the primary spokesperson for 400 million people would undertake a so arduous journey at 74 years of age, there must be other reasons for it than just to shine at the Russian tsar's formal coronation.

The purpose of his journey was the object of many guesses in the leading European newspapers, but these speculations were as loose and unfounded as their usual commentaries about the far away and unknown Chinese conditions.

Li Hung-chang's official instructions were:

1. To represent the emperor of China at the tsar's coronation.
2. To thank the tsar, the German emperor, and the French president for the intervention of Russia, Germany, and France that resulted in Japan relinquishing Liaotung.
3. To deliver personal letters from the emperor of China to Queen Victoria and the president of the United States.
4. To sound out the European major powers about the possibility of raising the import duties in the Chinese treaty ports when the treaties came due for revision in 1898.

The care with which Li Hung-chang chose the members of his mission is evidence that he also intended to subject the European civilization to a close examination. In addition to a large servant staff, it consisted of 35 gentlemen in diverse official positions. Among them were Li Hung-chang's adoptive son Li Ching-fang, who had earlier been ambassador to Japan, and his oldest son, Li Ching-fu.

I will also mention some of the other members since they may perhaps later come to play a role in international politics.

Loh Fêng-loh, the embassy's 1<sup>st</sup> Secretary. He is a Manchu by birth and has been Li Hung-chang's right hand for several years. At present he is China's ambassador in London.

Ta-ke-shih-nê, 2<sup>nd</sup> Secretary.

Ma Kien-chung, commercial advisor.

Lien Fang, Russian interpreter.

Lin Yi-nü, German interpreter.

Mei Shih-mei, French interpreter.

Hsüeh Fêng-yün, attaché.

Bêh Bin, attaché.

Chang Liu-hung, attaché.

} These three  
gentlemen were of  
*taotai* rank.

} These three were  
prefects or  
district magistrates.

Li Hung-chang departed for his former capital Tientsin on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March after an apparently friendly audience with the emperor. While he was there, the community council in the European settlement held a glittering banquet in Gordon Hall\*

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\* The community's civic hall named after Li Hung-chang's old friend and brother in arms.

for him. Li Hung-chang's successor as viceroy in Pechihli and his highest level officials were also invited to the feast.

On this occasion the community council's president gave a speech expressing the real sentiments with which the great Chinese statesman is regarded by the well-informed Europeans who for many years have had occasion to observe him at close range.

The speech shows that there are still Europeans in East Asia who can judge individuals of the yellow race by other measures than their monetary value.

The president spoke as follows:

"Your Excellence!

As members of this self-governing community in Tientsin<sup>\*</sup> we have thought that your departure from this port in your capacity as His Majesty, the Emperor of China's representative at his Imperial Majesty, the Tsar of Russia's coronation was a suitable occasion to laud an official who for so long has been responsible for the administration of this viceroyalty, an office which you have so capably managed for twenty years. Also to laud a Chinese noble and statesman who is famous in the West, whose nations we represent here. And we thought that it was fitting to hold this banquet, which Your Excellence has made us the honor of attending, in this building, which was inaugurated by Your Excellence six years ago, a building that bears the name of your old brother in arms, General Gordon.

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<sup>\*</sup> The European settlements in the treaty ports can be thought of as small republics protected by the treaty powers under the emperor's sovereignty.

We now take the opportunity to acknowledge with boundless admiration the service, which you have shown the emperor and your homeland by steering the ship of state through breakers and reefs into the harbor of peace. We applaud Your Excellency for the firmness and persistence by which you brought the negotiations in Shimonoseki to a fortunate conclusion despite the personal danger and harm\* that you have suffered, and for bravely having ignored the public outcry – which sometimes can be to a politician's greatest honor.

We rejoice to see Your Excellency so healthy and in such good humor despite your high age. As you in physical respects stand a head taller than all those around you, we acknowledge that you also intellectually have shown through a long career as scientist, soldier, and statesman that you tower high above your countrymen and are one of Asia's most prominent men. During Your Excellency's time in office you have been a leader of progress and despite strong opposition have advanced reforms in China. Railroads, telegraph lines, schools, hospitals, etc., bear witness to your hands-on work for the country's welfare and show that you more than any other living Chinese value Western civilization.

Your Excellency's journey to Europe is a historic event that strongly appeals to the imagination and will mark a memorable point in China's development.

For many of us the thought that you will soon stand face to face with other veteran statesmen and prominent

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\* While in Shimonoseki Li Hung-chang was shot through the jaw by a Japanese fanatic.

personages such as Prince Bismarck and Mr. Gladstone – the peers of Your Excellence – will be especially agreeable. An astute observer such as Your Excellence will surely come to appreciate the institutions that are a potent source of progress and national strength, and we leave it to your superior intelligence to judge to what extent and in which manner they may be of benefit for your homeland.

While we wish that God bless your journey, that you have good luck on land and sea, and a safe return, we hope that your journey will contribute to creating friendly ties between China and the rest of the world and bear fruits in grand and beneficial policies that will again lead to the future greatness and fame of this vast and ancient empire.

Your Excellence Viceroy Wang and gentlemen! I now call on you to join me in wishing this evening's guest, His Excellency Li Hung-chang, bon voyage!"

After flourishes by the orchestra and jubilant cries of affirmation from those present, *Taotai* Loh Fêng-loh warmly expressed Li Hung-chang's appreciation.

Among other things, the old statesman said that he was glad that acknowledgment of his efforts in the interest of peace had been expressed. Although it must be the opposite of the perceptions that currently ruled among most nations, the Chinese nation had always wanted **peace** and all Chinese statesmen worked to maintain the peace.

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Li Hung-chang      Li Ching-fang      Li Han-chang  
The Li family

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The embassy went aboard the steamship "*Hae-an*" the day after the banquet and arrived in Shanghai Saturday March 14. The North China Herald reported:

"The native troops began marching into the French settlement at daybreak. The gunboats out in the harbor raised their flags, and the piers were filled by several hundred officials and officers while the French police mounted an honor guard by the gangway.

The gunboat "*Chünho*" arrived from Woosung at 6 AM. with Shanghai's *taotai* and magistrate onboard. They immediately went ashore to see that everything was in order to receive the great man. About an hour later Chên *Taotai* and a score mandarins of similar rank arrived at the pavilion, which had been set up where the party was to come ashore. At 8:30 AM the warships began saluting and the troops gave a general salute, since "*Hae-an*" was then in sight. The steamship laid along the pier a quarter of an hour later and the ambassador came out on deck wearing the famous yellow jacket.\* His Excellence looked to be in a brilliant humor and waved with one hand to the thousands of people who greeted him on their knees. The troops fired another general salute when he entered into his sedan chair.

The solemn procession began with a couple of infantry battalions followed by two cavalry officers carrying the yellow dragon flag. Then came a long row of servants with

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\* The orders of the Yellow Jacket and the Three-eyed Peacock Feather had already been returned to Li Hung-chang when he traveled to Japan to negotiate the peace treaty.

pennants and tablets upon which the ambassador's many titles and honors were painted in gilded Chinese script such as: "Extraordinary Ambassador, 1<sup>st</sup> Class," "Grand Secretary in the Throne Room," "Awarded the Three-eyed Peacock Feather," etc. Behind that followed the Chinese and French honor guards, a dozen adjutants – and finally Li Hung-chang himself in his green sedan chair.

In the rear followed a couple of blue palanquins with the gold seal, which had been made on the emperor's orders for the occasion, and a simpler seal, which denoted his position as Grand Secretary. At the bridge between the French and English settlements, the French honor guard left, and the procession continued on its way through the English quarter. Both sides of the streets were guarded by European, Indian, and Chinese police officers.

Not a sound was heard from the several thousand natives, who seemed to observe the famous statesman with intense curiosity mixed with fear. A solemn quiet – a sign of the greatest respect – ruled everywhere from the moment the ambassador's green sedan chair came into view.

It took more than an hour and a half before the procession arrived at the house in the Chinese quarter where the delegation was to stay. Here all the high officials had gathered for an opportunity to meet the ambassador, but in that they were disappointed. Only the recently appointed viceroy of Yünnan, who just then happened to be passing through Shanghai, was granted a short audience."

However, later the other gentlemen got ample opportunities to pay their respects to Li Hung-chang, since he

stayed in Shanghai a whole week while one fête followed the other. The American consul general's ball was of special interest, since here the foreigners not only got an opportunity to see the great statesman himself, but also his 77 years old brother Li Han-chang, who in 1894 had retired as viceroy of Canton, both accompanied by their sons and grandsons – possible future emperors.

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On the 21<sup>st</sup> of March the delegation left Shanghai as passengers on the French mail packet "*Ernest Simon*." The English governor in Hong Kong hoped that Li Hung-chang would accept an invitation to a banquet in the governor's palace, but in this he was disappointed. The ambassador pleaded fatigue, but it was suspected that Li thus meant to express his displeasure at England's refusal to participate in the Liaotung intervention.

In Saigon, however, Li Hung-chang showed no signs of fatigue. He seemed to feel very well during his stay in the French colonial capital and received the French expressions of acclaim with undisguised pleasure.

The mail packet arrived in Port Said on the 20<sup>th</sup> of April, and from then on the delegation were guests of Russia. Li Hung-chang went aboard the steamship "*Russia*," which the Russian government had put at his disposal. Here he met the famous Prince Ukhtomsky, who was to act as the ambassador's adjutant.

"*Russia*" arrived in Odessa on the 28th after a splendid passage through the Dardanelles in beautiful weather. A correspondent reported:

"The whole splendid city was decorated for a celebration. The piers, all viewpoints, and the 52 steamships that lay in the harbor were packed with people who wanted to get a glimpse of the uncommon visitors. The ambassador was received at the gangplank by Odessa's prefect accompanied by several generals and high officials.

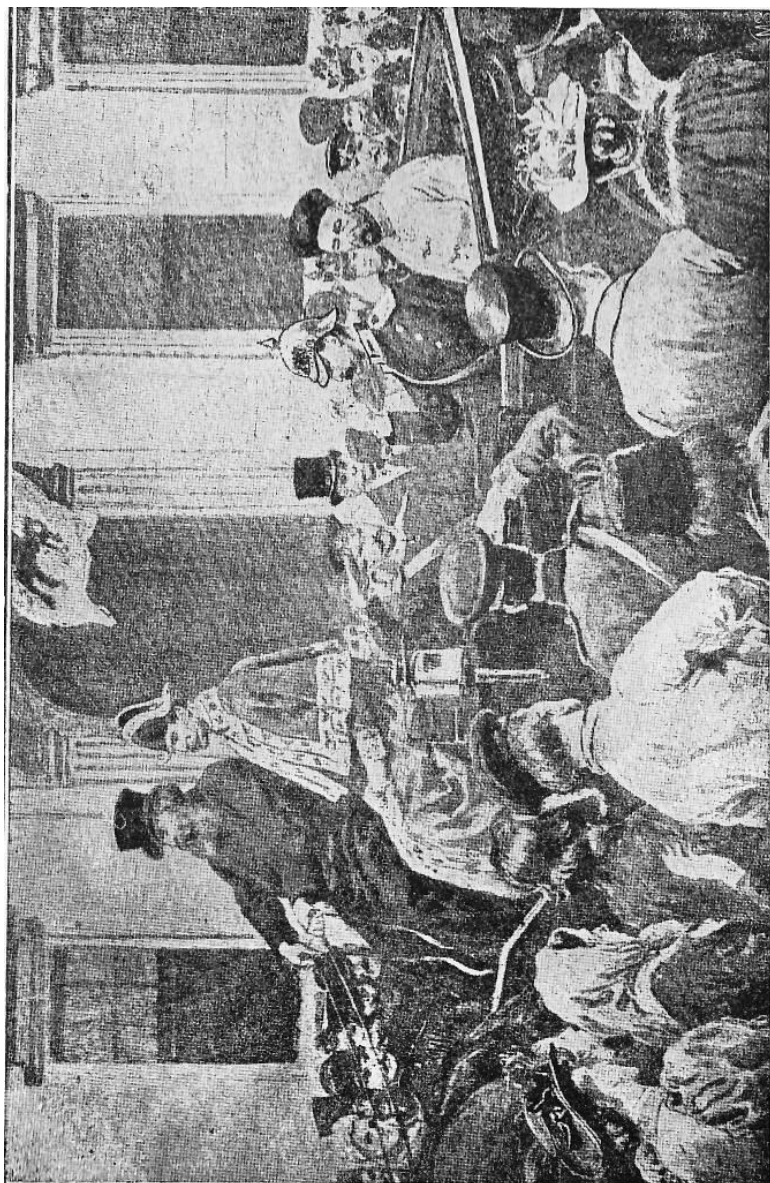
The 57<sup>th</sup> Infantry regiment, who formed the honor guard, presented arms, an orchestra struck up, and under earsplitting jubilation the ambassador and his entourage were driven to Hotel St. Petersburg. Here Li Hung-chang was received by Admiral Zelenoi and a couple of adjutants that the Foreign Ministry had put at his disposal.

Odessa held a banquet for the Chinese delegation in the evening, and little after midnight Li took leave of his cordial hosts. An imperial special train brought him to Russia's capital within 48 hours.

During his stay in St. Petersburg Li Hung-chang spent most of his time in diplomatic negotiations with the Russian foreign minister. What the results of these were is not known, but it is likely that a closer relationship was formed between the two empires that have a common border stretching for more than 5,000 kilometers.

After the coronation in Moscow on the 26<sup>th</sup> of May, Li Hung-chang traveled on to Berlin.

In Germany there were great expectations of good material results from his visit. The whole German industrial



Li Hung-chang in Moscow.



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world dreamt of fat contracts for delivery of materials for Chinese railroads and the Chinese army and navy. The toasts offered during the extraordinary fêtes put on in his honor by the German people from the Kaiser on down made such direct allusions to what Germany expected from him that he in a thank you speech at a banquet given by the chamber of commerce in Cologne was obliged to express the hope "that unjustified expectations would not arise from the occasion of his visit. His intention was only to further the friendly understanding between China and Germany."

As an indication of how far the Germans went in their self-interested enthusiasm for Li Hung-chang, it may be mentioned that the armaments tycoon Krupp during a banquet in Essen unveiled a bronze statue of his famous guest. Certainly Li Hung-chang is known for being quite immune to flattery of whatever kind, but a gesture of such adulation must surely have touched even a heart of stone – and led to orders for lots of cannon.

During his stay in Germany Li Hung-chang also paid a visit to Bismarck at Friedrichsruhe. Even if this meeting of the greatest statesmen of the East and the West had no political significance, it still was an historic event that greatly appealed to the imagination.

Bismarck's guestbook is said to have a note: "The Bismarck of the East meets the Li Hung-chang of the West," which is quite descriptive, since many parallels can be drawn between these historical giants – both in physical and intellectual respects.

In the end of June Li Hung-chang left Germany's hospitable soil without ordering any more than a couple of armored cruisers. The whole German press erupted in a unanimous howl of indignant rage and disappointment, which surely must have provided Li Hung-chang with a good deal of amusement, since he had read to him all that the major news organs had to say about his embassy, and when this great observer of humanity eventually writes his memoirs and describes the people he has dealt with, the Germans will surely get theirs in return.

The Germans can, however, comfort themselves with the thought that, if they have not gained much in respect from the Chinese, Li Hung-chang's visit will still have produced material advantages. China still has uses for German industrial products, and the Chinese have found that they can buy both cheap and good things in Germany.

That the Germans have understood the situation is shown by the following article in "Vossische Zeitung":

"Li Hung-chang's departure brings to an end an episode which every German with self-respect must view with mixed emotions. Political and commercial considerations resulted in a courteous and even enthusiastic reception of the Chinese emperor's influential representative.

But much more was done than ought to have been done – perhaps more than can be considered consonant with Germany's dignity and certainly more than would be wise before this extraordinarily intelligent representative of the world's most supercilious nation.



The Bismarck of the East meets the Li Hung-chang of the West.

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In the German capital Li Hung-chang was showered with such honors as if he himself was the almighty ruler and not just an official who might tomorrow lose his yellow riding jacket for the second time.

Out in the provinces they have made every effort to exceed Berlin – if such was possible. Even in his prime Prince Bismarck would not have been received with more extravagance in Stettin, Essen, Cologne, and other centers of German industry than was Li Hung-chang, who – in Germany and not in China – was given the flattering soubriquet of "the Chinese Bismarck."

Strange thoughts – hardly flattering for Germany – must have occurred to this supreme sceptic from the land of the queue when he saw the bearers of the proudest names in German industry swarming about him as if he was a magician, who with a wave of his hand could cause a mighty stream of gold to flow into their pockets.

It is said that Li Hung-chang is very interested in European affairs and keeps well up to date with the latest developments in the leading newspapers. If that is the case, he must have known of the attitude toward China that was prevalent a few weeks ago.

He thus could not have been anything but astonished to see how the mere fact of his arrival and the presumption that he carried with him a large sack of money were sufficient to create an ostentatious enthusiasm for China, which has found expression in the most extraordinary forms.

He can hardly have formed any especially favorable opinion about German principles and German pride. The

honors heaped upon the Chinese statesman so far have had few practical results. The expected showers of gold did not materialize, the proceeds are negligible. Germany has awakened after the Li Hung-chang intoxication with a severe hangover, which hardly will receive much sympathy from anywhere. Those who suffer from it have only received the punishment they deserved."

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From Germany, the ambassador traveled to Holland and Belgium. Li Hung-chang has always been interested in these small countries, since they have no fleets in East Asia that can bombard the Chinese port cities, and there thus is not any large risk in hiring Dutch and Belgian engineers to manage factories and railroads – even if they do not renounce their blessed extraterritorial rights. In the future, Dutch and Belgian engineers will presumably find extensive opportunities for employment in China.

The Dutch and Belgians were well acquainted with the great statesman's views, and they too received him in a princely manner and with honors that hardly any crowned head could demand.

During Li Hung-chang's European travels, the press quoted many "naïve" remarks and questions that the ambassador was supposed to have uttered at various occasions. Of course, most of it was invented, but while traveling by rail through the most prosperous grain fields in Holland he was said to have remarked in a humorous tone to

the high officials accompanying him that considering the wealth and fruitfulness of the country, he was surprised – that the English had not annexed Holland.

I believe this anecdote to be true, since Li from experience has a vivid perception of English colonial greediness.

The delegation arrived in Paris on the 13<sup>th</sup> of July and Li Hung-chang visited the president the next day. He was received in Elysée Palace with much ceremony. A battalion of infantry was drawn up as an honor guard by the entrance. President Faure received him surrounded by the whole cabinet, seven generals and admirals, and other high officials.

After having expressed gratitude for the intervention, Li remarked that the relationship between China and France had become still friendlier since the borders between China and French Indo-China had been agreed.

At the end of his reply the president said: "We are confident that our countrymen, especially after the visits you wish to make to our large industrial centers, will receive from Your Excellence the mighty help which your great influence in your home country enables you to offer."

It was really impossible to give a clearer hint that Li ought to show his gratitude by placing some orders with French industrial concerns. The painful experience of the Germans seems to have been noted.

Li's reception by the French business community was notably cooler than it had been in Germany.

French businessmen are not given to paying out more than they expect to take in. Despite the exceptionally



aggressive behavior by the French in East Asia, their financial operations in the region have been an absolute fiasco.

We remember the political persecution that Jules Ferry was subject to in his last years. That "*le Tonkinois*," as he was mockingly called, did not become president of France was entirely due to his efforts to build up a French colonial empire in East Asia from old Chinese vassal states. This mistake cost the French taxpayers many millions with no other result than that the deficit in the Tongking budget for last year ran to 30 million francs. Not to mention the thousands of French soldiers who have found and will find death in the endless war with the natives.

During the negotiations with China, the French representatives have always applied all possible pressure to get Li Hung-chang to sign onto provisions for railroad construction and other industrial projects that specify that China **shall** employ French engineers and French products, but so far they have not gotten more than the problematic **may**.

The present French envoy, M. Gerard, is a more than usual persistent gentleman and during his stay in Peking he has seen opportunity in the destruction of the French Jesuits' properties. Besides the usual damage reimbursement, Gerard has tried to get the Chinese government to give France various "concessions." Among other things, only French companies should be permitted to construct railroads in Tongking's neighboring province Yünnan – in anticipation of Yünnan's future annexation to French Indo-China.

In early 1897 a trade treaty was concluded that was said to be extremely advantageous for France at China's expense.

The German press expressed its doubts about the text of the treaty and a parliamentary question was put in the French Chamber of Deputies about it – since the industrial world had so often been frustrated by *may* instead of *shall*.

Despite that Hanotaux replied that the telegraphed text was correct, I am confident that the Chinese diplomats once more have outwitted their French colleagues. Besides, the English will see to it that the French do not win any commercial advantages that can harm their own in this region – since the English are also keen to gain "access" in Yünnan.

After visiting the largest industrial cities in France, Li Hung-chang arrived in Le Havre on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August. Here he inspected the shipyards accompanied by President Faure and the following day he sailed across the Channel to Southampton, where a special train awaited to take him to London.

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There had been much discussion in the English press about how the English people should receive the Chinese celebrity – in order to make the greatest possible impression on *him*.

England's commercial connections to China comprise 80 per cent of the total Chinese trade with the outside world. Most of China's unpleasant conflicts with the West have been with England and without Li Hung-chang's diplomatic skills the deplorable scenes from the Opium Wars would surely have repeated themselves. England's history in China is not

among the brightest chapters in the story of Western civilization, but now it was thought that Li Hung-chang's visit could be an opportunity to settle past accounts and enter into a new era.

Should Li Hung-chang be received with enthusiasm as in Russia and Germany or reserved as in France – or something in between?

However, all the papers agreed before his arrival that the eminent Chinese in any case should be received in a dignified manner, – and that the English are very good at.

As in the other countries, the ambassador and his entourage became "guests of the state," and Carlton House, which has housed so many crowned heads, was put at his disposal.

The day after his arrival, he visited Lord Salisbury in the offices of the Diplomatic Service. Thereafter he drove to the Houses of Parliament, where he was ceremonially received by the members of both Houses.

Li had an audience with the queen in Osborne on the 5<sup>th</sup> of August. On his arrival he was met by the Admirals Salmon and Freemantle, who earlier had commanded the British squadrons in East Asia. These gentlemen led the ambassador onboard the queen's yacht "*Alberta*" while being saluted by 19 shots from HMS "*Victory*." Two lines of the British navy's most powerful warships were drawn up outside Spithead and, while "*Alberta*" passed between them, the same salute thundered from each of the colossi.



Li Hung-chang transmits a letter from the emperor of China to Queen Victoria.

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Li Hung-chang went ashore at East Cowes and from there drove to Osborne accompanied by an honor guard of navy seamen.

After lunch came the formal audience during which Li personally handed the queen his emperor's letter. Later in the afternoon he returned to Portsmouth while being saluted by the fleet. The next day was spent inspecting the docks and arsenals, after which Li returned to London.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of August the ambassador made a charming gesture that instantly transformed the English people's "reserved" posture into warm enthusiasm. Early in the morning he drove with his entourage to General Gordon's statue in Trafalgar Square and a grand laurel wreath was placed on the pedestal while a visibly moved Li Hung-chang saluted the statue. The wreath carried an inscription in English: "To the soldier and friend of China. A tribute of respect from Li Hung-chang."

From Trafalgar Square the ambassador drove to St. Paul's Cathedral and the delegation went in a solemn procession up to General Gordon's black marble cenotaph. Here he stood quietly for a while contemplating the dear features of his old friend and comrade in arms – the only unselfish European that Li Hung-chang has known.

The Times wrote of this occasion: "No event during Li Hung-chang's European travels has been better suited to show our distinguished guest's noble and sympathetic character than the homage he today has paid to General Gordon's memory. For a Chinese to honor his ancestors is the highest duty, which has got religious power through the traditions of

uncounted centuries. We appreciate the powerful Chinese representative's acknowledgment of the British hero's great character, and we value Li Hung-chang's gesture even more because he carried it out with such touching delicacy and graceful style."

In the afternoon of the same day Li traveled to Salisbury's home at Hatfield House, where the prime minister had invited a garden party in honor of his great colleague. Among the distinguished guests who were presented to Li Hung-chang was Crown Princess Stephanie of Austria-Hungary, with whom he chatted for several minutes with the assistance of his usual paraphrast, His Excellence Loh Fêng-loh.

A week later Li Hung-chang found an opportunity to visit Gladstone at Hawarden Castle. The meeting between the Grand Old man of China and the Grand Old Man of England was rather more informal than with Salisbury at Hatfield House.

After exchanging greetings with Gladstone and the other members of the family, Li Hung-chang and Gladstone began to talk about everything and anything. The great diplomats gave way to their natural impulses and seemed just like two normal people who enjoyed each other's company. It was – according to one of those present – as if two old friends had met after several years apart. As a memento of the visit, Gladstone presented his Chinese guest with an edition of his collected works, something Li Hung-chang, who has written a lot himself, presumably appreciated.

From Hawarden the ambassador was taken on a tour of Great Britain by his hosts.

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Li Hung-chang at General Gordon's tomb.

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It looked as if the English had determined to draw the greatest possible drafts on the Grand Old Man's health, but Li Hung-chang bore up under the ordeal with flying colors.

He left England and Europe on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August as sprightly as ever after nearly 4 months of almost super-human exertions as China's representative abroad. Before he left Southampton he published an open letter to the British nation, which showed that he had a better opinion of Gordon's fellow countrymen than that which their behavior in East Asia would have entitled him to:

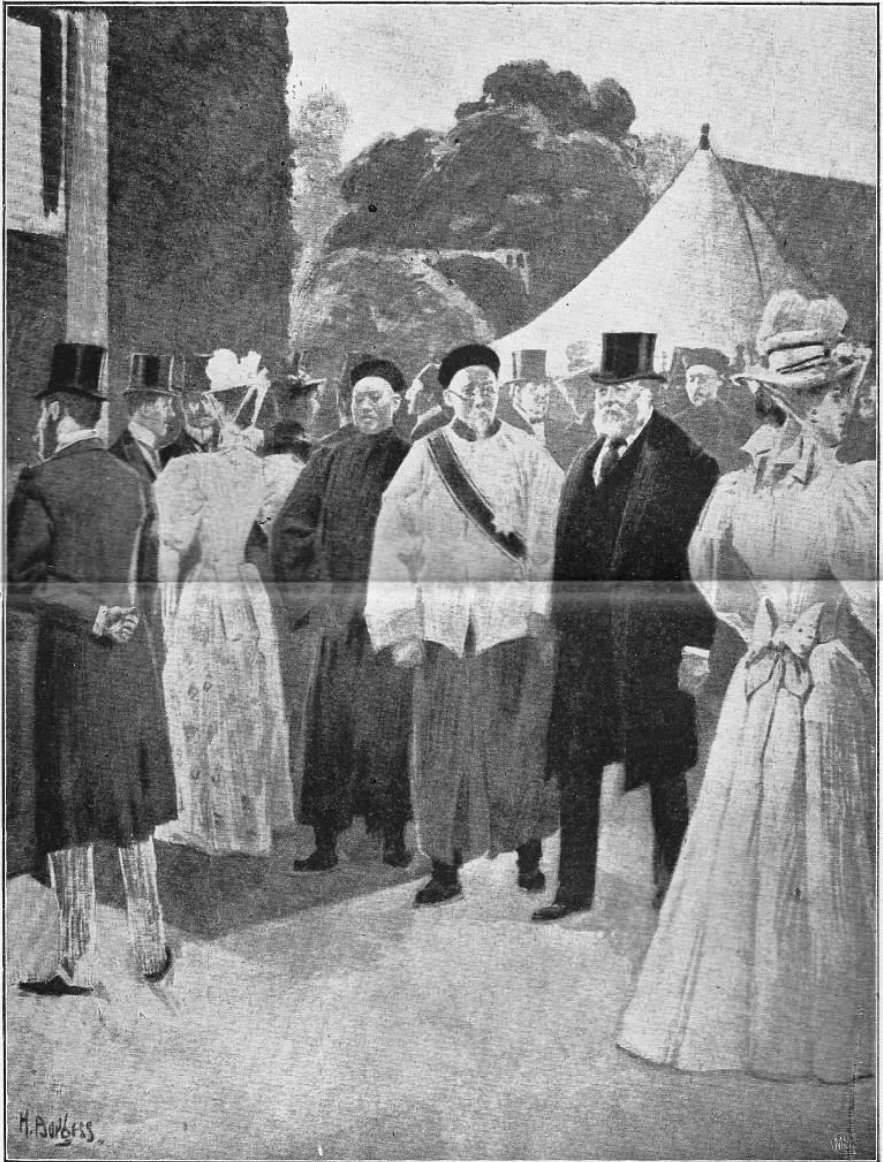
"As I leave Great Britain I find it impossible to hide my feelings for a nation that has shown me so much warmth and hospitality during my visit. I hope in all modesty that I have made a small impression on the English people as they have made a great impression on me and that these mutual feelings will not be soon forgotten.

I have been astonished by the British nation's store of knowledge, of wealth, and of power. It has been of much interest for me to study the many outstanding qualities that characterize this great nation.

It is openly stated that international politics are entirely dominated by selfish motives, but I venture to deny the truth of this. As in scientific education, theory and practice ought to work together also in a country's policies. The people's opinions and feelings are woven so tightly together with the interests of the state that it is impossible to separate them.

I hope that I may again grip the rudder of the state when I return to China. Not for my own sake, but because it gives me opportunity to serve my people and the great empire that I

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The Marquis of Salisbury's garden party.

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The Grand Old Man of China and the Grand Old Man of England.



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have represented while staying among you. I truly hope that I in the future can rely on being supported by the great leading nation of the West for whatever administrative work I might be given to lead. May my visit serve to further tighten the friendly bonds that tie mine and your homelands together and help to develop China's unlimited natural resources for the benefit of mankind in general"

From Southampton, the ambassador sailed to America and from there across Japan to China, where he arrived in late September.

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Although several months have now passed since Li Hung-chang's homecoming, his wish to take the state's helm again still has not been granted. To the contrary, his enemies have risen again with renewed strength and do everything they can to make his stay in Peking as unpleasant as possible for the old statesman.

It is said that even the emperor has been jealous about all the honors that Europe had heaped on his great subject – to whom the emperor owes both his throne and his life.

That Li does not leave Peking and withdraws into private life like his brother is almost unbelievable for most people. He surely deserves to rest after his long career.

But Li probably does not wish that the reactionary faction shall gain the upper hand and stop the many progressive shoots from taking root and growing. He probably still hopes that he and the dowager empress can once more be victorious

in the bitter fight that now plays out behind the curtains on Peking's imperial stage.

The battle is joined for China's future. Dark and heavy clouds are again forming in the political skies over East Asia.

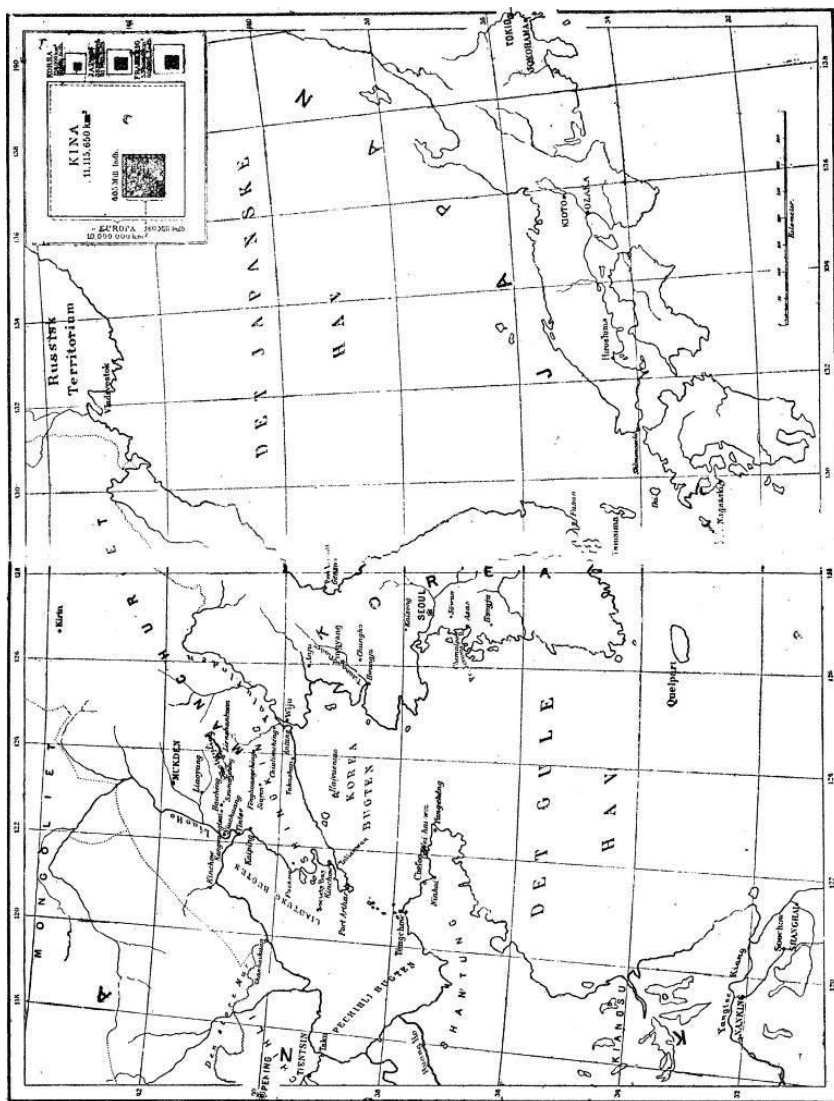
The Germans in a less than gentlemanly fashion have got possession of the port city Kiaochow and other European states again seem to be dreaming of China's "partition."

Whether the young emperor Kuang Hsü wants to or not, he will be obliged to ask the old pilot to once more take the helm of the ship of state, and the powers bent on partition will learn that Li Hung-chang still lives.

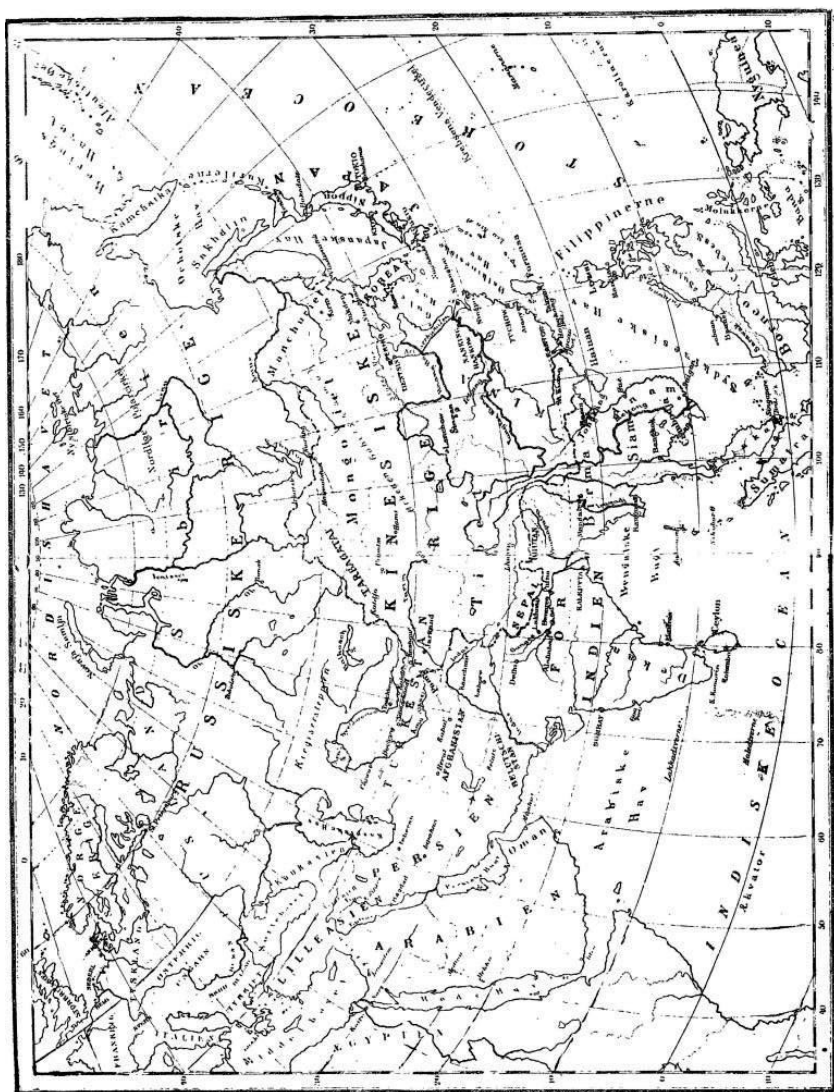
The great statesman has so many times before in this century bailed his homeland out of greater difficulties.

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"The height of a tower can be measured by its shadow and great men by the number of their enemies," says a Chinese proverb. If that is true, the Chinese have already given Li Hung-chang pride of place, since no one is hated like him. But when his countrymen eventually erect a monument over his grave, it will be because the whole nation has come to acknowledge that this clear-sighted patriot was the greatest son of China in this century.



Map of the battlefield.



Map of Asia.